

TOKYO AMERICAN CLUB

# iNTOUCH

October 2011

## At the Helm

Presidents past and present reflect on the challenges of running the Club



Art Extravaganza  
The Club hosts the annual  
CWAJ Print Show

Emergency Essentials  
Pick up survival tips at the  
Club's Disaster Awareness Day

Fishing for History  
Japan's picturesque heartland  
keeps an ancient tradition alive

東京





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Be among the first to experience Tokyo's newest premier dining venue.

Check the Club website and Facebook this month for details.

food & beverage 8

### Drawing a Younger Vintage

Ahead of uncorking some vintages at the Club this month, Mike McEvoy of Joseph Phelps Vineyards explains how an Internet-savvy generation of quaffers is revolutionizing the business of crafting wine.



recreation 16

### Cyclin' USA

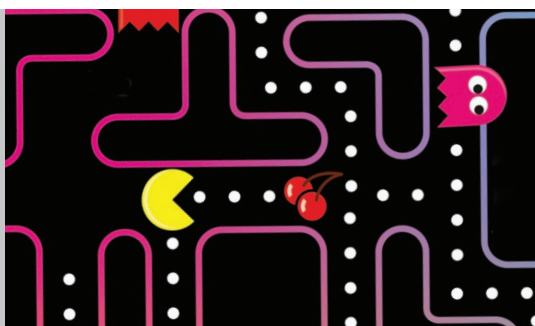
What is it like to race 4,810 kilometers across the United States in less than a week? One cycling enthusiast and Club Member reveals all.



talking heads 36

### Game Over?

As the country that spawned Super Mario struggles to keep up with the international gaming industry, video game expert David Abrams explains why Japan's once-on-top game developers are looking for an extra life.



feature 24

### Leading the Way

What motivates someone to seek the Club's top elected spot? In this month's *iNTOUCH*, Club President Lance E Lee and former premiers Dick Cropp and Greg Carley sit down to discuss the challenges of leadership and the evolution of a Tokyo institution.



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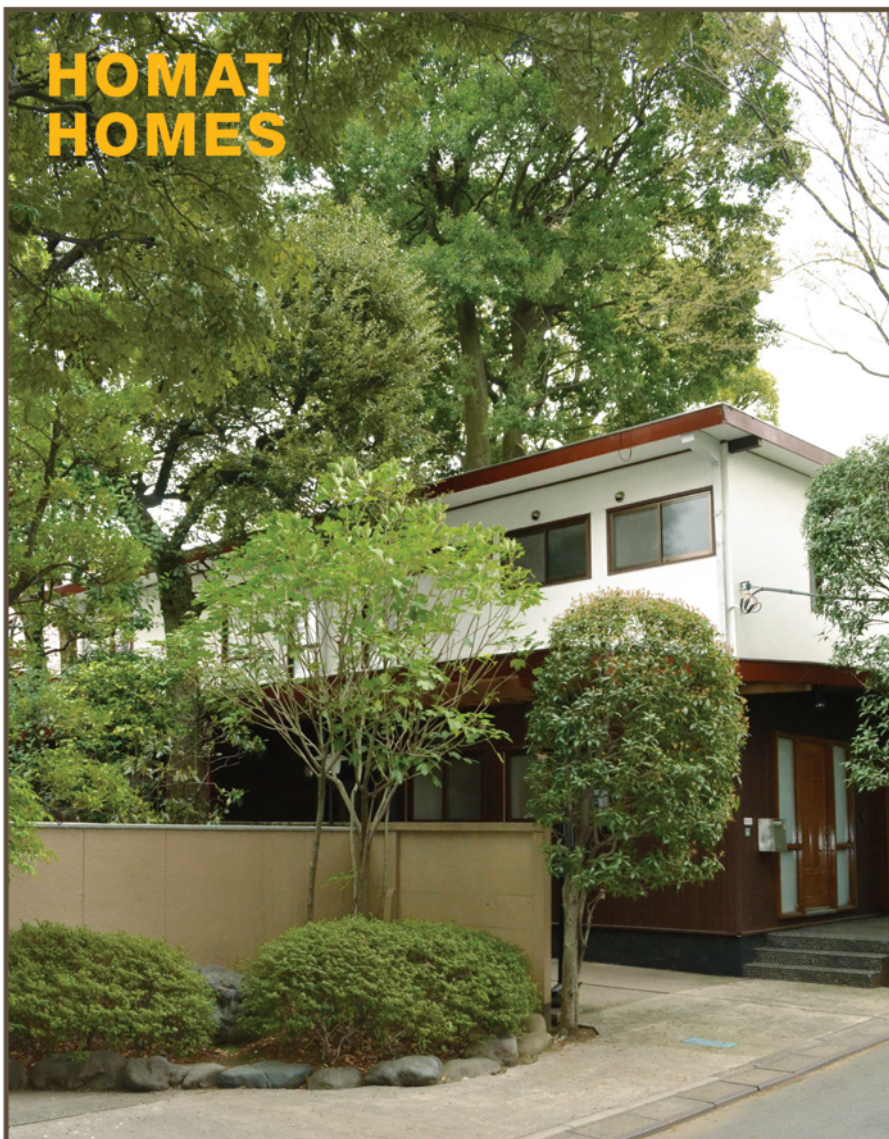
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The late Fred Harris, a longtime Member of the Club, was in no doubt about the importance of the role of president of Tokyo American Club. "I felt that the president of the American Club, next to the American ambassador, was the highest position that a person could have," he explained, sitting in his apartment on a bright February afternoon in 2010.

Serving as president for two elected terms, from 1998 to 2002, Harris was in the hot seat on September 11, 2001. "I was responsible for securing the safety of the Membership," he said, referring to the numerous security measures that were introduced at the Azabudai facility following the terrorist attacks in the United States. He also had to deal with the enormous economic impact of that day, as large numbers of Members were repatriated by their companies.

Describing himself as a "real John Wayne," Harris, a veteran of the Korean War and a talented artist, said that he most enjoyed the position during the pomp and ceremony of Independence Day.

"Being able to stand on the stage on July 4—I'm a very patriotic guy—and see the American flag come to me and to know that I was the person who was responsible for the attitude and the atmosphere and charisma of the Club...this turned me on," he said.

In this month's cover story, "Leading the Way," on pages 24 to 29, the current president, Lance E Lee, together with two former Club premiers, Greg Carley and Dick Cropp, sit down for an engaging conversation that encompasses the challenges of running the Club, the role of the Club in a highly cosmopolitan Tokyo and each man's motivation for running for the top job in the first place.

Certainly, Harris was resolute in his reasoning for continuing as president. "I felt like I was making a contribution," he said, "and I felt like I was doing a good job."

*If you have any comments about anything you read in INTOUCH, please e-mail them to [editor@tac-club.org](mailto:editor@tac-club.org), putting "Letter to the Editor" in the subject title of the mail.*



## contributors



Steve  
Romaine

A native of Los Angeles, Steve Romaine became fascinated with Asian history and civilization after visiting museums in Europe. He studied Japanese at Tokyo's International Christian University before earning a degree in law and diplomacy from the Fletcher School at Tufts University. A long-time Tokyo resident, he is married to Machiko, a teacher at US and international schools. They have two children. Having worked in both banking and recruitment for the finance industry, Romaine now runs the Tokyo branch of the recruitment firm the New Millennium Group. A regular organizer of BYOB wine dinners for friends at Tokyo restaurants, he is a member of the Club's Wine Committee. On page 9, he previews this month's tasting of New Zealand wines.



Betsy  
Rogers

Originally from the United States, Betsy Rogers has been living in Tokyo with her husband, Ed, for more than 10 years. A former president of the Women's Group, the mother of four helped to organize and write the group's *Tokyo: Here and How* guide to living in Japan. Ahead of the Women's Group-organized Disaster Awareness Day on October 23, she explains, on pages 20 and 21, how tips gleaned at previous visits to the informative event proved useful after the March earthquake. Rogers, who holds a master's degree in international relations and public policy from the University of California, San Diego, used to live in Beijing. She and her family are on sabbatical this fall in New Jersey.

## Find Us on Facebook and Twitter

Join the Club's social network and keep tabs on news, photos from events and announcements, take part in lively dialogues and so much more. Look for the Tokyo American Club page on Facebook and Twitter and discover endless ways to connect with your fellow Members!



# What's happening **in October**

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |                     |                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |                     |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |                   |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |                        |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------|
| 1–2                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       | Saturday–<br>Sunday | 1–31                                                                                                                                                                                                            | Saturday–<br>Monday | 2                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | Sunday            | 2                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   | Sunday                 |
| <b>Family Photos</b><br>Mark the upcoming holiday season with a photographic keepsake by Ken Katsurayama. Saturday: 9 a.m.–6 p.m. Sunday: 9 a.m.–5 p.m. Beate Sirota Gordan and Haru Reischauer classrooms. ¥25,000. Sign up at the Member Services Desk. |                     | <b>Halloween Treatment</b><br>Visit the Spa section of the Club website or the fourth-floor haven of relaxation to find out how you can earn a surprise Halloween voucher when you book a treatment this month. |                     | <b>Hokkaido Crab Fair Grand Buffet</b><br>Enjoy fresh seafood and crab. Brunch: 11 a.m.–3 p.m. Dinner: 5–8 p.m. Adults: ¥4,900; juniors (7–17 years): ¥2,800; children (3–6 years): ¥1,800; infants (2 and under): free. Reserve at 03-4588-0977. |                   | <b>Kamakura Samurai Archery Ceremony</b><br><i>Yabusame</i> equestrian archery has been performed annually in Kamakura since 1187. Secure a seat close to the action on this Women's Group tour. Sign up at the Member Services Desk.                               |                        |
| 4                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         | Tuesday             | 4                                                                                                                                                                                                               | Tuesday             | 5                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | Wednesday         | 5–6                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | Wednesday–<br>Thursday |
| <b>Toddler Time</b><br>A half-hour session of fun, engaging stories and activities awaits preschoolers at the Children's Library. 4 p.m. Free. Continues October 11, 18 and 25.                                                                           |                     | <b>Dynamic Hip-Hop Dance for Kids</b><br>Become a poppin', lockin', glidin' machine through this high-energy hip-hop dance class. Continues every Tuesday through November 8. Flip to page 19 to learn more.    |                     | <b>Forging Japan's Future</b><br>Club Member Brian Salsberg discusses the book <i>Reimagining Japan</i> . 7–8 p.m. Toko Shinoda and Yukiko Maki classrooms. ¥1,575 (includes one drink). Sign up online or at the Library.                        |                   | <b>Tokyo: Here &amp; Now</b><br>Get the scoop on living in Japan by establishing a new network of friends at this expert-led seminar. 8:30 a.m.–2:30 p.m. Club Members: ¥20,000. Non-Club Members: ¥22,000. Sign up online or at the Member Services Desk.          |                        |
| 11                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        | Tuesday             | 13                                                                                                                                                                                                              | Thursday            | 14–16                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             | Friday–<br>Sunday | 15                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | Saturday               |
| <b>Candidates, Last Call!</b><br>Nominations from the floor for next month's election of the Board of Governors will be accepted until 5 p.m. Find out more on page 15.                                                                                   |                     | <b>CWAJ Print Show Preview</b><br>The CWAJ kicks off its annual celebration of Japanese contemporary prints with a Member-exclusive preview in Manhattan II and III. 8 p.m. Page 30 has the details.            |                     | <b>CWAJ Print Show</b><br>The Club hosts a three-day extravaganza of eye-catching prints by 192 talented artists. 11 a.m. Find out more about this public event on page 30.                                                                       |                   | <b>A Day at the Races</b><br>Members take in the galloping spectacle of the sport of kings from the royal enclosure of Tokyo Racecourse in Fuchu. 9 a.m. Flip to page 14 to learn more.                                                                             |                        |
| 17                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        | Monday              | 19                                                                                                                                                                                                              | Wednesday           | 21                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                | Friday            | 22                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | Saturday               |
| <b>Monthly Luncheon: Rakugo in English</b><br>Rakugo performer Kimie Oshima raises the roof with a sidesplitting routine of Japanese comedic storytelling. 11:30 a.m. Flip to page 23 for more.                                                           |                     | <b>New Zealand Wine Tasting</b><br>Exemplary wines from New Zealand's striking variety of winegrowing regions take center stage at this Wine Committee event. Details on page 9.                                |                     | <b>Tokyo Bay Lunch Cruise</b><br>Set sail for an afternoon of picturesque views, good company and fabulous fare on this Women's Group tour. Sign up at the Member Services Desk.                                                                  |                   | <b>Sudoku Fun Day</b><br>Sudoku puzzle pioneer Kaji Maki hosts a day of numerical riddles and tips. 2–4 p.m. Toko Shinoda and Yukiko Maki classrooms. Adults: ¥1,680; children (8–17 years): ¥1,050; infants (4 and under): free. Sign up online or at the Library. |                        |
| 24                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        | Monday              | 28                                                                                                                                                                                                              | Friday              | 29                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                | Saturday          | 29                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | Saturday               |
| <b>Gallery Reception</b><br>Celebrate sensational ceramicists Mimi Kanno and Roni Ohara's return to the Club at this exhibition launch at the Frederick Harris Gallery. 6:30 p.m. Turn to page for 32 for the details.                                    |                     | <b>Diet Tour</b><br>Walk the corridors of power in the National Diet Building in Nagatacho on this guided tour. Check the Club website for details.                                                             |                     | <b>Bench Press Challenge</b><br>Put those biceps to the test at this ultimate strength challenge in the Fitness Center. To find out more, turn to page 19.                                                                                        |                   | <b>Jeepers Creepers!</b><br>The Club hosts a Halloween celebration packed with games, prizes, spooky storytelling and frighteningly good fun. For all the ghoulish details, flip to page 19.                                                                        |                        |



3

Monday

**Fall Swim Programs**

For those looking to feel a little more comfortable in the water, new sessions of Parents and Tots and Adult Stroke Development kick off at the Sky Pool. Find out more on the Club website.

4

Tuesday

**Cape Mentelle Wine Dinner**

Aussie winemaker Robert Mann hosts a fun evening of spectacular wines from pioneering Margaret River winery Cape Mentelle. 7 p.m. Café Med. ¥9,500. Sign up online or at the Member Services Desk.

6

Thursday

**Art for Mommy and Me**

Toddlers and their moms enjoy creative sessions of artistic fun. 10:15 a.m. Continues every Thursday through November 17. Flip to page 19 for more.

8

Saturday

**Cabernet & Conversation**

Mingle with Members and sample outstanding wines during this party hosted by local wine guru and Member Bill Campbell. 6–9 p.m. ¥5,000. Open to all Members. Sign up online or at the Member Services Desk.

15

Saturday

**Joseph Phelps Wine Dinner**

Mike McEvoy of Joseph Phelps Vineyards hosts a delectable evening of fine food and praiseworthy vintages from this award-winning Napa Valley winery. 7 p.m. Page 8 has more.

16

Sunday

**"Opening the Door"**

Find out about a Western pioneer in Meiji-era Japan at this play about James Curtis Hepburn, a medical missionary who created the Hepburn system of romanization of Japanese. 1 p.m. and 5 p.m. Details on page 15.

23

Sunday

**Disaster Awareness Day**

Pick up an array of practical tips that will leave you better equipped to deal with disaster at this family-oriented event. 3 p.m. Find out more by turning to page 20.

23

Sunday

**Kettlebell Class**

This ultimate all-body toning class kicks off for a semester of endurance- and strength-building. 11 a.m. Runs every Sunday through November 27. More on page 19.

31

Monday

**Coffee Connections**

Whether you're new to Tokyo or want to meet new people, drop by this relaxed Women's Group gathering. 9:30 a.m. Beate Sirota Gordon Classroom. Contact the Women's Group Office to organize free childcare. Free.

## Coming up in November

- 4 Run for the Cure Golf Tournament
- 8–9 International Bazaar
- 22 Thanksgiving at the Club
- 26 Run for the Cure/Walk for Life

## TOKYO NEW YORK SINGAPORE HONG KONG

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MORIMURA Ray  
SAITO Kiyoshi  
SHIOMI Nana  
TAMEKANE Yoshikatsu

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TSUBOTA Masahiko

**STENCIL**

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MORI Yoshitoshi

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SHINODA Toko  
WAKO Shuji

**ETCHING & DRYPOINT**

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HIRATSUKA Yuji  
IMAMURA Yoshio  
KURODA Shigeki  
NAKAZAWA Shinichi  
OKADA Marie  
TANAKA Ryohei  
SAITO Noriko

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HAMANISHI Katsunori



Charmer - 2009, 7/15 by Hiratsuka Yuji (b. 1954)

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# An Insider's View

by Kevin C Bloomer

**A**s a longstanding Member of TAC, I was always a little curious about how the Club was run. Since joining the Board of Governors last year, I have been exposed to the inner sanctum of the Club's system of governance, and I would like to share some of my impressions and observations.

**Organized.** TAC's system of leadership, which includes the Board, committees and management, operates in a structured fashion. The Club's bylaws are an elaborate set of rules and procedures that are constantly updated and improved. At meetings, I often hear the bylaws being quoted, referenced and used to facilitate decisions. Moreover, our governance system has recently been enhanced using a world-class model developed by the Club Managers Association of America.

**Volunteer-based.** It has been remarkable to see how hard the governors and committee members work for the Club. Let's not forget that they are volunteers, and it's not a bad thing for us all to be reminded of this occasionally. I am truly impressed by the commitment these volunteers show and their genuine desire to get things right.

**Committed.** We have several committees that meet once or twice a week—every week. And for those of us who have demanding jobs, most of these meetings must be held at breakfast, lunch, dinner or on weekends. Although the meetings are well structured, they are often long so as to ensure that everybody's views are heard. Recently, one of our committee members attended a two-hour meeting via cell phone while on vacation. It also happened to be his wife's birthday *and* they were at the beach, so this unwavering

## Board of Governors

Lance E Lee (2012)—President  
 Brian Nelson (2012)—Vice President  
 Mary Saphin (2011)—Vice President  
 Steve Romaine (2012)—Treasurer  
 Deb Wenig (2011)—Secretary



Kavin C Bloomer (2012), John Durkin (2012), Norman J Green (2011), Hiroyuki Kamano (2012), Charlotte Kennedy Takahashi (2012), Per Knudsen (2012), Jeff McNeill (2011), Amane Nakashima (2011), Jerry Rosenberg (2011), Ann Marie Skalecki (2012), Dan Stakoe (2011), Ira Wolf (2011), Shizuo Daigoh—Statutory Auditor (2012), Barbara Hancock—Women's Group President

commitment can even be risky to one's marriage!

**Passionate.** You may have heard that some of the meetings get a bit loud. Attendees want to be heard and are sometimes overzealous, but they are always respectful. Club volunteers are undoubtedly passionate and committed to ensuring that TAC remains among the best clubs in Asia.

**Skillful.** Committees are often made up of people with complementary skills. For example, the Compensation Committee was tasked to find a replacement for Michael Bumgardner, who is retiring after more than 10 years as general manager. This committee consists of a human resources specialist, a hospitality expert, a Club vice president, the head of the Women's Group and a lawyer. The well-balanced team focused on delivering to the Board a list of candidates capable of managing a world-class club.

**Open.** The Board, committees and management are not perfect, but we do strive to serve the Membership in the best way possible. We need and want Member input. As Ed Koch, the former mayor of New York City, used to say: "How am I doing?"

A year ago, I had a rather uninformed view of the Club's leadership system, but as a new Board and committee member, I am proud to serve with this group. Although we don't always get it right, you can rest assured that TAC is led by qualified individuals who work tirelessly to make sure that we all enjoy membership to one of the region's finest social clubs. □



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# Having Your Say

by Michael Bumgardner

Michael Bumgardner  
General Manager



As we start the new fiscal year this month, we are also preparing for next month's Annual General Meeting (AGM) and Board of Governors election. The Nominating Committee's slate of candidates has been posted in the lobby. From now until October 11, we will also accept nominations from Members (see page 15 for details). It is vital that you review the candidates' platform statements and vote for those Members you feel can lead the Club through the financial challenges ahead.

On the agenda at November's AGM will be the Club's new Articles of Association. The articles have been prepared to comply with the new Japanese laws for nonprofit organizations (NPO) and are needed to apply for our recertification as an NPO. This is a vital vote for the future of your Club as we risk losing our NPO status if not recertified. The Club must comply with the laws, apply and be approved to maintain our status.

You, too, can assist your Club in the difficult times ahead by socializing and hosting business meetings here while introducing friends and acquaintances to all that our dynamic community has to offer. Remember that the lifeblood of any club is its members. They provide not only the revenue required to operate, but also vitality and camaraderie.

Newer facilities well worth taking advantage of include our seven stylish Guest Studios (peruse the overnight options on the

Club website) and our soon-to-open formal dining venue on the third floor: Decanter. Look out for more information about the opening of this elegant space.

While excellent, our facilities will be empty without Members. It is only through existing Members that we can grow our unique Tokyo institution and so meet our current challenges. This year, we introduced a new type of membership. Term Regular Membership is geared to those people who are in Japan only a short time or who are not sure how long they will stay.

For others, this is an inexpensive way to try the Club for up to three years. The entrance fees are lower, while the monthly dues are higher. Consider bringing that longtime associate or friend to the Membership Office and let our staff explain this new option. Should they decide to join, we will reward you with a ¥40,000 voucher for the introduction.

As with any endeavor, particularly one as mammoth as the Redevelopment Project, it's important to receive regular feedback. For us, the semiannual Member satisfaction survey provides us with many valuable opinions and comments. You should have received a link to the online survey via e-mail by now. If you haven't, just contact the Management Office for assistance.

This will be the first survey after moving into our Azabudai facilities, so your input is critical and will allow us to evaluate how we are doing and where we need to make improvements. □

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- Botox for Migraine Headaches
- Restylane, Juvederm
- Retin-A, Obagi
- Liposuction, Eye, Nose, Breast, Facelift, Tummy Tuck
- Laser (Titan, Genesis, IPL)
- Tattoo Removal (Laser)
- Men's (ED,AGA)
- Reconstructive Surgery

Member

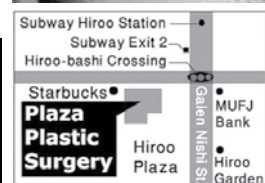


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## Drawing a Younger Vintage

by Erika Woodward

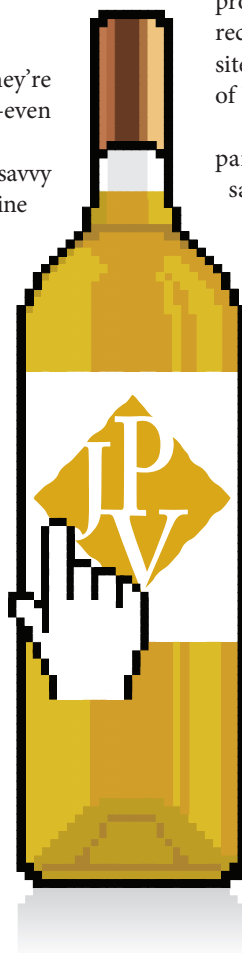
**T**hey're clued-up, courageous and convivial, and they're revolutionizing how wine is being talked about—even in California's well-established wine country.

Meet the Millennials: 70 million social network-savvy young people who represent the fastest growing knot of wine consumers in the United States, and they're being wooed as much for their buying power as their insatiable appetite for sharing news about wine online.

But contrary to their stereotype as undiscerning Internet gossipers, Millennial wine drinkers are a thoughtful and informed bunch, according to Mike McEvoy of the renowned Napa Valley-based Joseph Phelps Vineyards, who will be hosting a dinner at the Club this month.

The director of sales and marketing says these Gen Y quaffers, generally born between 1981 and 2000, are giving the baby boomers a run for their Merlot. "The so-called Millennial generation is more curious and better informed about the subject of wine," McEvoy says. "Therefore, they may be a bit more adventurous and confident."

According to the Wine Market Council, more than half of Millennials in the United States sip wine at least once a week. And they're taking the snootiness out of wine by making the wine banter accessible to anyone with an Internet connection.



Phelps, which was founded in 1973, has welcomed this new breed of wine lover with a 21st-century communications overhaul. "We completely redesigned our website in 2010," McEvoy says. "More recently, we have also embraced social media as a means of staying in touch with our customers."

More than 40 percent of Millennials maintain pages on social networking sites, according to the wine council report, and a similar number again actively read and write online product reviews. "[Millennials] are more likely to work on recommendations by their peers via the social networking sites or text messages," said Lulie Halstead, chief executive of Wine Intelligence, in a 2009 report.

Ultimately, though, convincing Millennials to buy a particular bottle is about winning their trust. McEvoy says Joseph Phelps does it by consistently producing great wines, like its signature Insignia.

Still, this celebrated winery isn't resting on its laurels. Its Fogdog Pinot Noir, produced by Phelps' Sonoma Coast estate, Freestone Vineyards, has been well received by the youthful cohort.

"Our Fogdog brand has helped introduce us to a new generation," says McEvoy. "The wines are delicious and represent good value. The name is fun, almost whimsical by our standards, and the label is pretty cool."

Find out for yourself at this month's dinner. All generations of gourmand welcome. □

Joseph Phelps Wine Dinner

Saturday, October 15

7 p.m.

New York Bridge

¥15,000

Sign up online or at the Member Services Desk

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At around 30 years of age, New Zealand's modern wine industry is young, but what an innovative ferment it has undergone in those few decades.

Growers and winemakers are still experimenting furiously with what grapes to grow where, how to raise their wines and generally which model to follow: Old World, New World or homegrown.

New Zealand has a striking variety of winegrowing regions, from the subtropical north to the temperate, mountainous south. The country's maritime climate (nowhere is more than 130 kilometers from the sea) enhances the wines' fruit-driven intensity, lays a foundation for wines both elegant and powerful and contributes to the balance and structure that make them so food friendly.

The local wine industry attributes much of its "magic" to its SWNZ (Sustainable Winegrowing New Zealand) initiative, which promotes best practice in water usage, energy consumption, waste management and biodiversity. At this month's Wine Committee tasting, attendees can discover exactly how such schemes and approaches

are influencing soils and grape varieties.

Although Sauvignon Blanc from New Zealand is recognized by experts as a legitimate new expression of that grape, alongside the original models of Pouilly-Fumé and Sancerre in the Loire Valley, how are local winemakers doing with other noble varieties like Chenin Blanc, Riesling, Chardonnay, Syrah, Cabernet Sauvignon and, especially, Pinot Noir? What difference does it make when a wine comes from Marlborough or Martinborough, Otago or Waipara, Gisborne or Hawke's Bay?

With Kiwi wines as our backdrop, we'll also explore two different but compatible styles of wine tasting: analytical and emotive. Grasping a wine's concentration, ripeness, complexity and acidity is useful, but so also is evaluating whether it is assertive or restrained, tender or intense, inviting or formidable, or even reminiscent of a song, a bird or a piece of art.

So remember to bring your poetic souls, along with your taste buds and intellect, when we sample the offerings of the land of the long white cloud. □

Romaine is a member of the Wine Committee.

## wine tasting

# Youthful Stars of the Wine World

by Steve Romaine

New Zealand Wine Tasting

Wednesday, October 19

7 p.m.

Washington and Lincoln rooms

¥10,000

Sign up online or at the Member Services Desk

### Join Us

Those Members interested in being a part of the Wine Committee and who have attended several wine events over the past six months should contact committee chair Mark Baxter.



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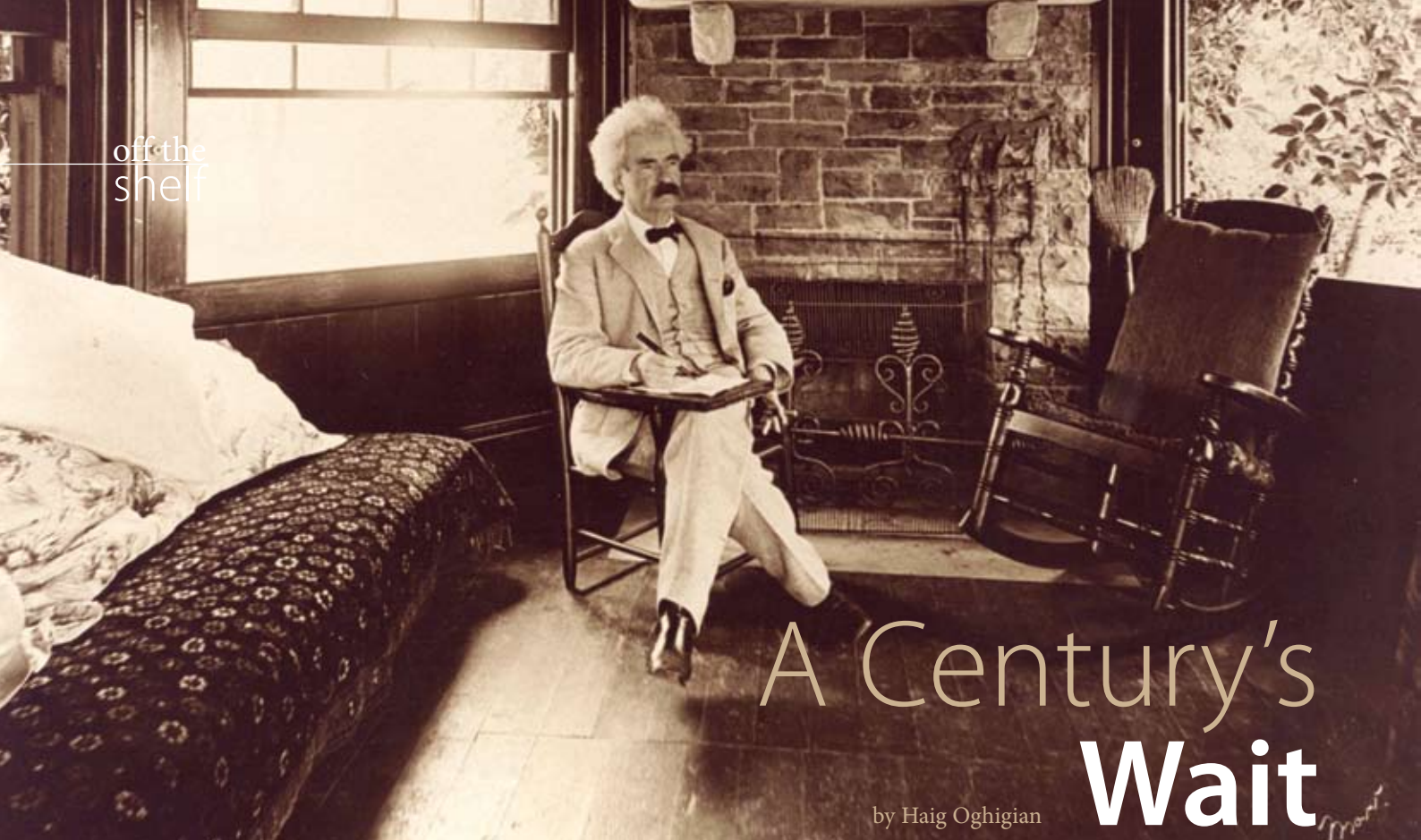
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# A Century's Wait

by Haig Oghigian

It's not every writer whose autobiography is only finally published a full century after his death, but then Mark Twain was no ordinary writer. His 1884 masterwork, *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*, may have been the second Great American Novel (Herman Melville pipped Twain to the post with *Moby-Dick*, published 30 years earlier), but Twain's belief that colloquial American vernacular was sturdy enough to bear the weight of major moral literature means its influence has been far more enduring.

The book exemplified Twain's strong and enduring nonconformist streak; its merciless satirizing of a Southern antebellum society and its entrenched attitudes, particularly casual racism, was prescient. The high school culture wars that periodically engulf Twain's work today, with liberal hand-wringing over his use of the "N-word" (common parlance in the pre-Civil War period in which the novel is set, lest anyone forget), would have wryly amused him. "In the first place, God made idiots," he once said. "That was for practice. Then he made school boards."

Despite once asserting that "I have never taken any exercise other than sleeping and resting," Twain was an unusually industrious writer. Born Samuel Langhorne Clemens in 1835, he grew up in Hannibal, Missouri, the thinly disguised

setting for the frolics of Huck Finn and Tom Sawyer.

He apprenticed as a printer, but dreamed of being a steamboat pilot. He got his wish in 1857. The experience garnered Twain an abundance of material for his later books, as well as his pen name: "mark twain," a riverboat term, meaning the water was 12 feet deep.

Eventually becoming a newspaperman in California in the 1860s, Twain found his laconic, fireside style, which he honed as a stand-up performer. He was not lacking in wit or satirical aphorisms: "there are lies, damned lies and statistics," "to succeed in life, you need two things: ignorance and confidence" and "denial ain't just a river in Egypt" are among the wealth of phrases he coined.

After writing his great works, Twain settled into the role of eminent (and eminently quotable) man of American letters and proved to be on the right or, at least, the winning side of history on all the burning issues of the day, such as imperialism (anti, after being pro up to the Philippine-American War of 1900); civil rights (pro; he declared that Lincoln's Proclamation "not only set the black slaves free, but set the white man free also"); religion (agnostic; raised a Presbyterian, he wrote that "If Christ were here now, there is only one thing he would not be—

a Christian"); and science (gung-ho pro; he patented three inventions, including a replacement for braces).

Through it all, and the death of his wife and two of his four children, Twain retained his pugnacity. When he became one of only three men, including the Prince of Wales, to be made an honorary member of the Savage Club in London, he remarked, "Well, it must make the prince feel mighty fine."

This autobiography is Twain at his best. Unguarded, he says what he thinks (no wonder he mandated that it couldn't be published until 100 years after his death). At moments rip rousingly funny, at other times poignant, he comes across as a bit of a rascal with a good heart and plenty of wit.

Twain died in 1910 of a heart attack. He'd noted the year before that he'd been born in the last year that Halley's Comet had streaked past the Earth, and now it was due again: "The Almighty has said, no doubt: 'Now here are these two unaccountable freaks; they came in together, they must go out together.'"

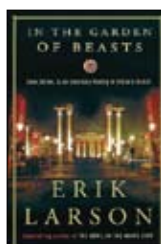
It was Twain's last crack, but he left a legacy as dazzling as any heavenly body. □

Oghigian is a Member of the Club.

*Autobiography of Mark Twain* and other selected works by the author are available at the Library.



## new reads



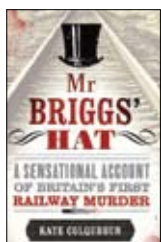
*In the Garden of Beasts: Love, Terror and an American Family in Hitler's Berlin*  
by Erik Larson

When an unlikely American ambassador to Germany, William Dodd, and his family must cozy up to Nazi party elites in the years leading up to the Holocaust, they get a shocking front row seat to espionage, Hitler's unraveling and the makings of genocide. EK



*Cycle World*

Hit the road with America's leading motorcycle magazine since 1962. Get up on the latest and greatest in motorcycle design, performance technology and safety features, and travel back in time with interviews with biking's biggest heroes and tributes to classic wheels. JT



*Mr Briggs' Hat: A Sensational Account of Britain's First Railway Murder*  
by Kate Colquhoun

In 1864, a bloody murder committed in a first-class compartment of the vital North London Railway transfixes two nations, as detectives scramble to identify the culprit and seize him as he tries to flee by boat to America. EK



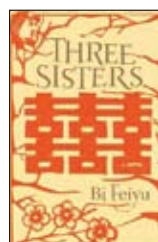
*Blood Ninja*  
by Nick Lake

Taro's world is torn apart when his father is murdered by attackers, who kill him, too. End of story? Not quite. Taro is brought back to life when an unknown ninja vampire gives him his blood, turning Taro into the living dead. So begins his journey into a world that he never imagined. EK



*Everyone Loves You When You're Dead: Journeys into Fame and Madness*  
by Neil Strauss

While they're still alive and kicking, 120 of the world's top stars, from Lady Gaga and Madonna to Chuck Berry and Keith Richards, open up about fame, fortune and more in this humorous and surprisingly intimate collection of candid celebrity interviews by this talented American writer. EK



*Three Sisters*  
by Bi Feiyu

Wang Lianfang sired seven daughters and has finally been granted the boy he had always hoped for, but it's his girls—whom he and society have largely written off—who emerge as the heroines of this novel that examines how women mired in the sexism of 1960s China strive to change the course of their destinies. EK

Reviews compiled by librarians Erica Kawamura and Joe Takahashi.

## member's choice

Member: Janice Jung  
Title: *Island of the Blue Dolphins*  
by Scott O'Dell

What's the book about?

It is about an Indian girl named Karana who lives alone on an island off California. While waiting for a ship to rescue her, she builds a shelter, makes weapons, finds food and fights her enemies, the wild dogs.

What did you like about it?

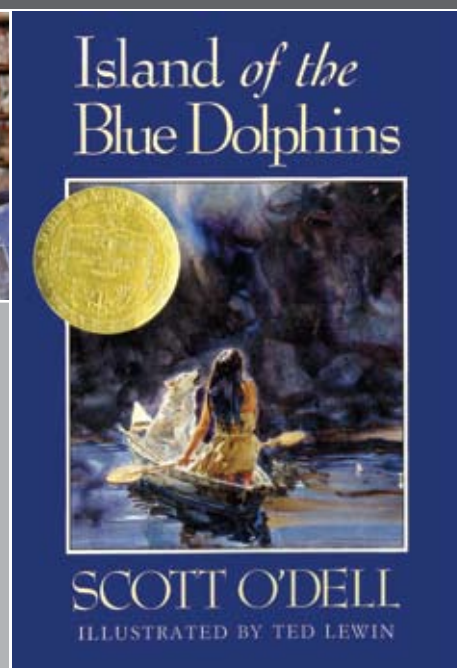
It is a good book because it is a story of survival and personal discovery.

Why did you choose it?

Because it is about war and finding a home on the Island of the Blue Dolphins.

What other books would you recommend?

I would recommend Frances Hodgson Burnett's *The Secret Garden*, which is also about discovery.



## City Centered

Frank Sinatra sang about its star-making power. Billy Joel celebrated its state of mind. And Jay Z rapped about the concrete jungle's inspirational properties. New York City: home to Broadway and barrios, Wall Street brokers and broke waiters. With a character all of its own, it has motivated singers, artists, musicians and filmmakers to share their own take on arguably America's most famous city.

A metropolis of contradictions and

iconic institutions, the Big Apple provides the perfect setting for some of the most popular movies of all time. Tony Manero (John Travolta) caught the fever at its famous nightclubs in 1977's *Saturday Night Fever*; Tommy DeVito (Joe Pesci) became the infamous gangster on its fabled streets in *Goodfellas* (1990) and Harry met Sally there in 1989.

This month, our own Club critics share their picks for the best flick set in the city that takes the lead. □



"For six seasons of the groundbreaking series *Sex and the City*, Carrie, Samantha, Charlotte and Miranda searched for love in New York. The show was filled with terrific fashion, hot men and witty dialogue—and it gave life lessons: unmarried women over 30 are just choosing carefully; it's possible to quit smoking; there *is* life after breast cancer; and even our heroes can be infertile. Now, in this fun film that picks up where the TV series left off in 2004, Carrie is to marry her Mr Big at the New York Public Library. She wears an original Vivienne Westwood dress from a Vogue fashion shoot. Bride, girlfriends and 200 guests await. But the groom drives away. I loved it!"

**Best movie set in New York City:**  
*Sex and the City*

Club critic: Sara Sakamoto



"Arthur Bach, sole heir to a fabulous fortune, lives the playboy life in New York City. Money lets him do what he wants—and he does. From dressing up as Batman and crashing his Batmobile into the bronze bull on Wall Street to renting out Grand Central Station for a special date with his girlfriend, he never has a dull moment. But Arthur faces a tough decision when he's forced to choose between losing his wealth or losing the girl of his dreams. The film features fine performances by Russell Brand (Arthur) and Helen Mirren (Hobson, his nanny). It's a great remake of the classic 1981 film, starring Dudley Moore, Liza Minnelli and Sir John Gielgud."

**Best movie set in New York City:**  
*Arthur*

Club critic: Harald deRopp



"Martin Scorsese's *Taxi Driver* is an eye-opening portrait of New York City at its skuzziest. Filmed in 1976, Scorsese avoids recognizable landmarks and focuses instead on the city's underbelly of prostitution, strip clubs and X-rated movies, along with crime, drugs and racial bigotry. Robert De Niro plays Travis Bickle, an ex-Marine taxi driver searching for justice. As he travels around the boroughs, the audience gets a glimpse of Times Square, 42nd Street and the infamous Columbus Circle, where De Niro, with a Mohawk coif, plans a shooting spree at a political rally. It's New York City at its darkest, but a classic masterpiece."

**Best movie set in New York City:**  
*Taxi Driver*

Club critic: Carol Simon

All titles mentioned are either available at the DVD Library or on order.





He is Club President Lance E Lee. She is Yuko Akisato, manager of the DVD Library.

# HE SAYS, SHE SAYS



● abort    ●● give it a go    ●●● smokin'

While not quite the sequel I was expecting, this movie is good as a stand-alone, with more action scenes than its predecessor and a spy-movie feel to it. The familiar theme of friendship remains in this visually impressive animated flick from Pixar.



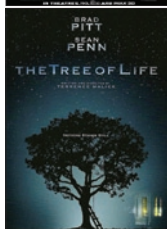
A visually stunning, well-paced film that sees racecar Lightning McQueen (voiced by Owen Wilson) team up again with tow truck Mater (Larry the Cable Guy) to compete in the first World Grand Prix. This is a great family flick, and I especially enjoyed the scenes in Japan.

If you've seen the first two installments of this series, watch this one. There's some good acting and the storyline twists are unexpected, though the 3-D version isn't too impressive and some scenes simply run a little longer than necessary.



Directed by Michael Bay and produced by Steven Spielberg, this third *Transformers* flick, starring Shia LaBeouf as Sam Witwicky, sees the Autobots take on the Decepticons in a race to reach a hidden Cybertronian spacecraft on the moon. I really need some advice from fans of this series on how to enjoy the films.

An astounding portrayal of American suburban family life in the 1950s. Once you stop trying to make sense of it, this interesting film flows like a good piece of music and may trigger some childhood memories. I like its message of forgiving one's parents and coming to terms with why they did what they did.



A beautifully shot artistic film that traces the complicated life of Jack, from his upbringing in 1950s Midwestern suburbia to his disillusioned adult years. While the movie has received great reviews, it seems a little long and boring. Maybe I just can't bridge the cultural differences. Another viewing might help.

A very nicely shot film and an excellent story. The performances are brilliant and the interaction between the characters really brings out the complexity of their personalities. The ending does seem a little too upbeat, but it's also a relief after a pretty depressing movie.



This Academy Award-winning Danish film features great performances from its teenage stars and beautiful cinematography. Dealing with the spectrum of raw human emotion, *In a Better World* follows the lives of two families in an idyllic Danish town. The overriding message appears to be forgiveness.

## other titles...

From popular TV shows to animated flicks, the DVD Library has a wide variety of fun and educational titles for kids. Below is a small selection of what's on offer.



### Scooby-Doo! Legend of the Phantosaur

Accompany the goofy, beloved canine and his classic, silly squad on a fun-filled, engaging hunt for a prehistoric ghost preventing paleontologists from uncovering fossils. Expect the familiar laugh-getting gaffes and kid-safe spooks.



### Scared Shrekless

Before naming the winner of their Halloween-inspired scary story contest, Shrek and his famous fairytale friends must spend the night in evil Lord Farquaad's haunted castle. Prepare for a night full of frights and a belly full of laughs.



### Olivia: Princess for a Day

Follow this pretty piglet on a grand adventure when she trades places with a princess for a day and receives all the royal spoils, along with lessons in preschool-age problem-solving and dreaming big.



### Barbie: Princess Charm School

Join gentle-hearted Barbie Blair Willows and her royal pals on a magical expedition for an enchanted crown that may prove the small-town blonde is actually the kingdom's missing princess. Beware of plotting foes.



### Sunshine Barry and the Disco Worms

Get down and dirty with earthworm Barry, who's sick of slithering at the bottom of the backyard food chain and laments his only job prospect as a middle manager of the compost pile—until a disco record inspires him to start the world's best band.



### Sesame Street: Elmo's Music Magic

Sing along with the lovable, ticklish star and his cuddly companions when Elmo waves a magic wand, making everyone on the famous street break out in endless song. Also stars Cookie Monster. (Parents, don't fear—spells can be undone.)



# Royal Visit

by Nick Jones

Take in the thrill of thoroughbred horses thundering around the racetrack while enjoying fine food and the odd wager or two during this month's excursion to Tokyo Racecourse in Fuchu.

Members on this trip to Japan's home of horseracing will be seated in the royal enclosure, from where they will be able to soak up the pulsating atmosphere of the sport of kings.

Built in 1933, Tokyo Racecourse recently underwent seven years of renovations and was reopened in 2007. The next-generation facility now features multiple high-definition screens—the largest in the world—to ensure punters don't miss any of the action.

Introduced to Japan by Yokohama's foreign community in 1862, horseracing now attracts millions of people to the country's tracks each year. And for equestrian aficionados and novices alike, this cultural day out is sure to be a winner. □

A Day at the Races

Saturday, October 15

9 a.m.

¥8,300 (includes transport and lunch)

Adults only

Dress code: jackets and ties for men and equivalent attire for women

Sign up online or at the Member Services Desk

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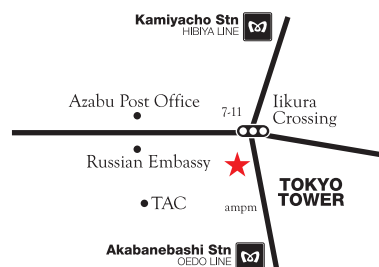
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# American Trailblazer

by Ken Joseph

After more than 200 years of isolation, Japan finally agreed to open her doors to the world when the US Navy's Commodore Matthew Perry and his squadron of so-called "black ships" arrived in Japanese waters in 1853. The subsequent treaty between the two countries ushered in an era of modernity in Japan.

In the following years, hordes of experts and businessmen from Europe and the United States headed to the newly opened ports. One of those was James Curtis Hepburn, a medical missionary from Pennsylvania. Starting a clinic in Yokohama, he later founded the Hepburn Academy, which grew into Meiji Gakuin University in Shirokane.

Ahead of its 150th anniversary celebrations in 2013, the university will put on a bilingual play, titled "Opening the Door," about the life of its founder and first president. Members interested in learning more about this influential American can join a Programs and Events Committee-organized trip to see the theatrical production.

But Hepburn's contributions didn't stop at education and medicine. He also wrote a Japanese-English dictionary and

devised a system for writing Japanese in Roman letters, known as the Hepburn system, or *hebon* in Japanese, which he used to translate the Bible into Japanese.

While there are other semi-official systems of romanization, Hepburn remains the most widely used system and can be seen on road signs, at train stations and in English-language publications in Japan. So a century after his death in New Jersey at the age of 96, Hepburn's legacy lives on in the country he called home for 33 years. □

Joseph is a Member of the Club.

## "Opening the Door"

Sunday, October 16

1 p.m. and 5 p.m.

Art Hall, Shirokane Campus,

Meiji Gakuin University

¥3,000

Recommended for ages 13 and above

Sign up online or at the Member Services Desk

Sponsored by the Programs

and Events Committee

# Last Call for Candidates

Nominations from the floor for next month's election of the Board of Governors will be accepted until 5 p.m. on Tuesday, October 11.

To run for a governor's position requires the signatures of 30 voting Members or designated spouses, along with a statement from the person being nominated that indicates that he or she has been a Regular Member or designated spouse in good standing for at least one year and is willing to run and serve a full two-year term.

Documents must be submitted to the Management Office by 5 p.m. on Tuesday, October 11. Candidates will

also be required to submit a policy statement by 5 p.m. on Wednesday, October 12. The Board will then approve the slate of candidates and post it at the Club entrance. □

For more information, please contact the Management Office.

## Meet the Candidates Night

November 9 and 14

6:30 p.m.

Washington and Lincoln rooms

Open to all Members

## Joining a Committee

Members interested in joining one of the committees listed should contact its chair or inquire at the General Manager's Office.

**Recreation** Tim Griffen

(Ira Wolf)

**Recreation Subcommittees**

**Bowling** Pam Jenkinson

**Fitness** Sam Rogan

**Golf** Steven Thomas

**Library** Melanie Chetley

**Logan Room** Diane Dooley & Cathleen Fuge

**Squash** Martin Fluck

**Swim** Jesse Green & Alexander Jampel

**DVD** Abby Radmilovich

**Youth Activities** TBA

**Compensation** Brian Nelson

**Finance** Gregory Davis (Steve Romaine)

**Food & Beverage** Craig Saphin

(Amane Nakashima)

**Food & Beverage Subcommittee**

**Wine** Mark Baxter

**Programs & Events** Barbara Hancock

**Programs**

**Frederick Harris Gallery** Yumiko Sai

**Distinguished Achievement Award** Jeff McNeill

**Sportsman of the Year** Jeff McNeill

**Sportswoman of the Year** Jeff McNeill

**Sports Lifetime Achievement Award** Jeff McNeill

**House** Jesse Green

(Charlotte Kennedy Takahashi)

**House Subcommittee**

**Architectural** Michael Miller

**Human Resources** Peter Capizzi

(Barbara Hancock)

**Membership** Alok Rakyan

(Mary Saphin)

**Membership Subcommittee**

**Branding** Mark Ferris

**Nominating** Nick Masee

Names in parentheses denote Board liaisons.



**E**xhausted, hankering for a shower and weighing at least 12 kilograms lighter than when he set out six days before, Jamie Slaymaker peddled behind a motorcade of flashing lights through Annapolis, Maryland, crowds cheering him on to the finish line.

“Once you start, it’s just about finishing the race,” he says of the 4,810-kilometer race across the United States he completed in less than a week.

The 36-year-old Englishman cycled for six days, across four time zones and 12 states, battling sleep deprivation, headwinds that threatened to blow him off his bike and all-over aches. And in spite of a shocking support-vehicle crash, he and his four-man team, the Crank Addicts, clinched a sixth-place finish in the annual Race Across America event against 32 other teams from 10 countries.

Starting out from Oceanside,

California, the team cycled day and night, traveling through the arid desert of Arizona, the world’s largest intermountain valley in Colorado, the Kansas plains, the Appalachian Mountains in West Virginia and the scenic farmland of Pennsylvania along the way, before arriving in Maryland’s capital.

But Slaymaker, who works in finance, is no stranger to challenges. Ever since he completed his first triathlon in Thailand in 2009 as part of a life-changing, weight-loss program, he has developed a passion for endurance tests. Currently gearing up for another triathlon in December, he follows an intense training regimen of swimming, cycling, running and sessions in the Club’s indoor-cycling class.

So when Slaymaker’s younger brother in Britain, Richard, proposed they complete cycling’s ultimate test with their cousin and friend, he

eagerly agreed. The preparation, he admits, was a logistical “nightmare,” as he gathered a support team of 12, including Slaymaker’s father, younger sister and a team doctor.

It took nine months of planning, safety checks and navigation briefings before, finally, the Crank Addicts rolled up to the starting line in California on June 18. With the support team traveling in two SUVs and an RV, and keeping in contact with the cyclists by radio, the caravan covered around 800 kilometers a day.

Two teammates would bike for four- or six-hour stretches while the other pair would rest. Between bathroom breaks, meals and the occasional restroom shower, Slaymaker says he averaged only two to three hours of sleep between each leg.

Not long into the race, the team faced the baking-hot sun and powerful

# Cyclin’ USA

In June, one endurance test-mad Club Member took to his bike and cycled across the United States.

by Erika Woodward  
Photo by Nick Scott



crosswinds of Arizona. “You’re leaning into the wind, just to stop yourself from being blown off the bike,” he says, leaning to his side to demonstrate the force of the gusts.

Traveling from coast to coast, the team climbed a total of 52,000 meters. Even though the peaks were grueling work, Slaymaker says, they packed magical views, like the one of Wolf’s Creek Pass in Colorado’s towering San Juan Mountains on day two. Locals call it the glass elevator. Slaymaker calls it the scenic highlight of the race.

“There we are, riding up to the Continental Divide, and it was just stunning,” he says, sitting in Traders’ Bar. “I learned what an incredibly beautiful country [America] is.”

By day five, the support crew were staying alert thanks to countless cases of Red Bull, while Slaymaker, who burned roughly 8,000 calories a day,

was living on energy bars (aside from the usual sore muscles, he suffered an aching jaw from the constant bar chomping). But when he and the team were able to relax, they did so in relatively cushy quarters.

That was before the crash.

It was 10 a.m. and the rain-slick roads in Batesville, Indiana, caught the RV’s driver by surprise. The vehicle slid uncontrollably and hit a telephone pole, ripping off the entire side and back of the RV and catapulting Slaymaker’s sister onto a stretch of sodden grass.

Slaymaker and his brother were resting in an accompanying SUV when it happened. “It was like a war zone,” he says, pulling his iPhone from the pocket of his khaki shorts to show a photo of the wreckage. “Everything we owned, pretty much, was thrown out onto this poor woman’s lawn.” He points

to where his sister landed next to masses of clothes and automobile parts. He recalls the driver’s face, too, which took the full force of the deployed airbag. Slaymaker considered quitting.

Everyone was “quite shaken,” he says. But his crew, nursing only minor injuries, encouraged the team to keep going and began cramming themselves into the two remaining (and soon, pungent) cars.

“[They said,] ‘Go, go, don’t let this stop you!’” says Slaymaker, who got back on his bike and continued on through Indiana, Ohio, West Virginia and Pennsylvania, before reaching the welcoming crowds of Annapolis. □

**Race Across America**

[www.raceacrossamerica.org](http://www.raceacrossamerica.org)



Jamie Slaymaker



## Creative Kids Club—Little Artist

This inspiring, fun class for children ages 3 through 5 utilizes a variety of techniques and materials to cultivate young imaginations and foster creativity. During exciting guided projects, the budding artists learn about art tools and colors and shapes, before being allotted time to produce whatever they like—making the possibilities for innovation limitless.

Little Artist classes run every Friday (3:30–4:30 p.m.) in Activity Room 1 until November 18. Find out more by visiting the Club website.



### Sanae Takahata The Instructor

Captivating visual artist Sanae Takahata's colorful, whimsical sculptures and oil paintings have graced galleries worldwide, from Paris to New York to Tokyo. With more than three decades of experience, this former student of childhood development and education has encouraged creativity among the Club's younger Members since launching Creative Kids Club in 2001.



### Haruka Tsuzaki The Student

"Now drawing and handicrafts are her favorite, and she is always drawing at home since joining Creative Kids Club. Instructor Sanae inspires children's creativity very well. I have discovered new aspects of my daughter, and the class has been fun for me as well." (Haruka Tsuzaki's mother, Hiromi)



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## I Can Tumbling

In this dynamic, confidence-boosting class, children, ages 6 to 12, learn a range of basic gymnastics skills, including forward rolls, cartwheels and handstands, before progressing to more advanced exercises like handstands and dive forward rolls.

October 25–November 29

Tuesdays

5:45–6:45 p.m.

¥15,750

Sign up online or at the Recreation Desk

## Bench Press Challenge

Test your upper-body strength against other weightlifters in the Fitness Center's first-ever bench press contest. Don't miss out on this day of competitive fun.

Saturday, October 29

Fitness Center

For ages 16 and above

## Art for Mommy and Me

Toddlers and their moms collaborate in this activity-packed creative art class that encourages imaginations through inventive projects.

October 6–November 17

Thursdays

10:15–11 a.m.

Ages 2–3

Sign up online or at the Recreation Desk



## Pop 'n' Lock

Shake, break and spin to the hottest dance music at this energetic introduction to hip-hop. Kicking off with the basics, the class also covers the latest routines and freestyle dance.

Dynamic Hip-Hop Dance for Kids

October 4–November 8

Tuesdays

Ages 6–9: 5–5:45 p.m.

Ages 10 and above: 5:45–6:30 p.m.

Sign up online or at the Recreation Desk

## Jeepers Creepers!

Don a spine-chilling costume for a day of spooky stories, creepy crafts and frighteningly good fun at the Club's Halloween celebration.

Saturday, October 29

10–10:45 a.m./11:15 a.m.–12 p.m./

1–1:45 p.m./2:15–3 p.m.

Gymnasium and Teen Lounge

Children (2–14 years): ¥2,520/Adults (15 and above): free (Halloween goodie bag and prizes not included)/Infants (1 and under): free (Halloween goodie bag and prizes not included)

Sign up online or at the Member Services Desk

## Toned by the Kettlebell

Certified kettlebell instructor Mark Atkinson leads challenging strength- and endurance-building sessions with the ultimate conditioning tool.

October 23–November 27

(trial class: October 16)

Sundays

11 a.m.–12 p.m.

Sign up online or at the Recreation Desk

# Preparing for the Unpredictable

by Betsy Rogers

One Women's Group member explains how tips gleaned at the annual Disaster Awareness Day proved useful in the hours and days after March's Tohoku disaster.

It was a beautiful balmy afternoon. A soft, fresh spring breeze carried the smell of sweet flowers in bloom as I coasted down the hill with my 4-year-old daughter after picking her up from school. Basking in the perfectness of the moment, I thought to myself how something always seems to go awry on such days.

Leaving my daughter at home with her tutor, I peddled back up the hill to pick up her 6-year-old brother who was playing tag at school. As I chatted with the other mothers, I noticed that all 12 children began to huddle together and squat in the center of the playground. "What game was this?" I wondered. Then my legs started to wobble as if I had just stepped off a sailboat.

The earth started to groan and telephone poles creaked as they swayed. Finally, I realized that it was an earthquake. I huddled with the kids and started counting. Stopping at 80, a thought struck me: "Was this the Big One?"

My husband was out of the country, my other two young

kids were at home on the top floor of an old, pre-building code apartment building, third-grader Eddie was at school and Wyatt was with me. Questions flashed through my mind: Was our building still standing? How much cash did I have? Were our passports up to date? How much gas was in the car? Could we live off canned tomatoes?

Since everyone in our family goes to school or work within a 10-minute walk from home, our emergency plan is to collect them and come home. We have our safe place in our apartment.

Tears welled as my worst-case scenario thoughts ended, but the shaking didn't. As I urged myself to stay strong, the shuddering stopped and an eerie stillness descended. Another group of children, who had been on the second floor of the school, arrived in their metallic-colored pillow hats. Their calmness grounded me.

With Wyatt on the back of my bike, I tore off home to find books strewn across the floor and shocked looks on the faces of everyone there. Thanks to the brace we had installed a few months earlier at the insistence of Chuck Grafft, a regular Disaster Awareness Day speaker who experienced the 1995 Kobe earthquake, our china cabinet was still standing.

With the frequent aftershocks continuing, we ran through endless renditions of the alphabet song to distract my 4-year-old daughter who appeared the most frightened. We decided to head outside, where a voice boomed out a tsunami warning over a loudspeaker and instructed us to move to higher ground. After two hours, the warnings stopped and we returned home.

## Japanese Screens Charity Sale 2011



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[www.JapaneseScreens.net](http://www.JapaneseScreens.net)

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Meanwhile, I ran through the emergency mental checklist I had learned at a previous Disaster Awareness Day:

Fill all bathtubs, sinks and water jugs, as we don't know the extent of the damage. Check.

Make sure I have cash, including small change for vending machines. Check (after I ran to the nearest ATM).

Buy food at the convenience store that doesn't require gas or electricity to cook (remembering not to hoard). Check.

Send an e-mail to family and friends, telling them we are safe and urging them to communicate by e-mail or landline to avoid overloading the cell phone network. Check.

Read US Embassy news alerts (I had already registered for the emergency update service). Check.

Check flashlights and candle supply. Check.

Ready emergency packs. Check.

Breathe.

I knew from earthquake and tsunami programs that the worst was yet to come. In our apartment, we watched the disaster unfold on TV. Out of harm's way, we continued our daily lives. School continued as usual the following week; the routine proved a comfort.

Since then, the ongoing Fukushima nuclear power plant crisis has thrown up its own set of concerns with regard to questions over food safety, providing yet another reason to attend this month's information-packed Disaster Awareness Day, with its array of expert speakers, practical tips and hands-on activities. □

Rogers is a member of the Women's Group.

#### Disaster Awareness Day

Sunday, October 23

3-5 p.m.

Free

Women's Group classrooms and Parking Lot

Open to the public



Kayo Yamawaki

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(above Aston Martin showroom)





## Wood-Fired Fervor

by Nick Jones

Ichiro Agata is something of a nomad. Ever since he left Tokyo for the United States to attend a boarding school in Florida in 1986, he has led a slightly offbeat life.

It's his itinerant nature, he surmises, that made relocating to his wife's hometown from Kasama, a pottery town in Ibaraki Prefecture, just 125 kilometers from the crippled Fukushima nuclear power plant, fairly painless. "Maybe because I lived in the United States, it was easier to move to Shikoku," he says by phone from Kochi. "That's my style."

Now ensconced in rural Shikoku with his wife and 3-year-old daughter, hundreds of kilometers away from radiation worries, Agata can concentrate on creating his ceramic works in preparation for this month's International Bazaar at the Club, where he will be one of about 60 vendors selling their wares, from woodblock prints to kimono-inspired fashions to traditional crafts.

After swapping the beaches and sun-drenched brashness of Florida for the more genteel surroundings of Vermont, Agata was drawn to art

in school, particularly pottery and sculpture. He pursued his interest at college in New Hampshire, where he became fascinated with the school's wood-fired kiln. "I had never seen fire like that," he says.

When not studying, he worked part-time at a local pottery factory, churning out functional bisqueware. The job proved to be a useful education. "I learned how to make stuff and the business of going out to craft fairs and exhibiting," Agata, 41, says.

As his interest in creating his own work grew, the attraction of formal study waned. "I decided I didn't need to do a degree to do [pottery], so I dropped out of college," he explains. He set up a studio with a friend in the small Massachusetts town of Warwick and set about experimenting with clay.

Returning to Japan in 1998, Agata continued his work, but in a more crowded professional environment. "The main difference [from the US] is

that there are so many potters here," he says.

Besides producing an array of elegant cups and dishes, he also shapes more unusual items on his potter's wheel, such as stylish sinks, plant pots and even textured toothbrush holders. "It's kind of interesting to think of something new," he says.

Although he was forced to abandon his wood-fired kiln in Ibaraki, Agata says he plans on building another one at his new home—a sign, perhaps, that the wanderer may be laying down roots. □



(l-r) Ichiro, Sara and Saori and Agata

### International Bazaar

November 8, 10 a.m.–8 p.m.

November 9, 10 a.m.–4 p.m.

Free

Open to the public

## What's Cooking?

by Betsy Rogers





Keeling on an oversized cushion on a bare stage, Kimie Oshima contorted her face and gestured animatedly before delivering the final rousing punch line. Used to laughter and applause at the end of a routine, she was caught off guard by what happened next.

"They were excited, yelling for more, all 900 of them," says the performer of *rakugo*, the 400-year-old Japanese art of comedic storytelling. "It was something I had never seen."

That was nearly a decade ago in the Philippines. Since then, the 40-year-old professor of sociolinguistics at Bunkyo Gakuin University has performed in America and 11 countries throughout Europe and Asia, and will entertain Women's Group members at this month's luncheon. Her mission: to bridge cultural divides with laughter while proving, contrary to the stereotype, that Japanese *do* possess a sense of humor.

She began her quest 15 years ago after fellow language researchers attending the International Society for Humor Studies in Sydney asked her if the Japanese ever joked or laughed.

"I found out people didn't believe the Japanese have any sense of humor...I needed to prove it to them," says the University of Colorado graduate, adding that humor represents a gateway to a culture and can inspire a deeper interest in a country's customs, values and traditions.

So, that year, Oshima threw herself into studying *rakugo* and was committed to performing the art entirely in English to reach the masses. But first she had to endure a training period that typically lasts three to four years and includes doing chores, driving and helping dress a *rakugo* master before his performances.

Traditionally a male-only art, *rakugo*'s

female performers often suffer prejudice, harassment and bullying during the comedic boot camp. "Many women quit," Oshima explains.

She also discovered that as a female comic she would have to alter characters' sexes and, at times, create new stories to be as funny as her male counterparts. Women less comfortable with gender-bending the scripts simply "shave their heads," she says.

With a full head of shiny black hair, Oshima completed her training a year later, but not before she returned in 1997 to the international humor conference, this time in Oklahoma, where she delivered her first-ever English-language *rakugo* performance. She's been traveling the world ever since.

"Laughter is a great tool to bring people closer together," she says. "People have different cultural backgrounds and some people have a hard time accepting different ideas and thoughts. But humor and laughter make it easier to accept [people who] are different from you. Humor creates better relationships, health, flexibility and communication. *Rakugo* does that to the audience. It's not a laughing matter, but laughing matters." □

#### English Rakugo

[www.english-rakugo.com](http://www.english-rakugo.com)

#### Monthly Luncheon: Rakugo in English

Monday, October 17

11:30 a.m. (doors open: 11 a.m.)

Manhattan I

Women's Group members: ¥3,150

Non-Women's Group members: ¥4,200

Adults only

Sign up online or at the Member Services Desk

monthly  
luncheon

## The Laughter Ambassador

by Erika Woodward



Kimie Oshima

The Women's Group is offering a tempting array of cooking classes this fall. From Chinese to Japanese to Indian cuisine, these fun and informative classes will enhance your kitchen skills and knowledge of food and culture.

Club Member and prolific Chinese cookbook author Nancy Ma will share with Members her wealth of cooking experience during three exciting classes. Each session, attendees will prepare a different delicious four-course lunch,

including such mouthwatering dishes as chicken and cashews, steamed fish with ginger and mango pudding.

If you are new to Japan or have always been fascinated by the Japanese *bento*, here's your chance to learn how to make a proper Japanese lunchbox. Noriko Tada and Kari Hyer will help you whip up easy-to-prepare favorites like the ubiquitous *gyoza*, a Chinese dumpling wildly popular in Japan, *okonomiyaki*, a scrumptious Japanese-style pancake, and *yakisoba*, the

famous fried noodles, during this three-week class.

Meanwhile, for those looking to add a little spice to their cooking repertoire, Club Member Hema Parekh, author of two Indian vegetarian cookbooks, will introduce students to the medicinal benefits of Ayurvedic cuisine.

So join us for a delicious culinary journey this fall. □

Contact the Women's Group Office to find out more.





(l-r) Dick Cropp, Lance E Lee and Greg Carley



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# LEADING THE WAY

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Ahead of next month's annual Board of Governors election, Club presidents past and present mull their reasons for running for the top job and the evolution of the Club.

Photos by Irwin Wong

World events have affected the Club since its founding in May 1928. In fact, it was the enactment of a law in Washington, DC, that partly contributed to the formation of the Club in the first place.

The 1924 Immigration Act, which included the Asian Exclusion Act, was introduced by the US government to control the numbers of people immigrating to the United States from particular countries and regions. In an increasingly awkward atmosphere for Americans in Japan, 51 American members of the Tokyo Club decided to establish their own institution.

According to documents from the time, the founders of the American Club wanted a place where expatriate American men could take their wives or girlfriends for evening drinks. Housed in the top three floors of the Iwamoto Building in Yurakucho, the Club's Membership quickly grew.

The opening of the new facility in January this year marked the Club's return to its permanent home in Azabudai and its sixth incarnation in its 83-year history. Over the decades, the Club has weathered war, global economic crises, epidemics and natural disasters.

During such trying times, as well as periods of prosperity, the responsibility of running the Club has rested ultimately with the Club's elected leadership: the president and Board of Governors. Dick Cropp was president for one term, from 1990 to 1992, Greg Carley led the Club for two terms, between 1994 and 1998, while the Club's 34th president, Lance E Lee, was elected in 2008 and reelected last year.

*iNTOUCH's* Nick Jones sat down with the three men to discuss the challenges that they faced during their terms and how the Club has changed over the years. Excerpts:



**iNTOUCH:** Why did you want to be president?

**Cropp:** I was on the Board probably seven or eight years, and after being secretary and vice president, what else was there to do? I have no desire to be back on the Board. I don't think I can contribute that much.

**iNTOUCH:** Not everybody wants to be president, so what drove you to run for the position?

**Cropp:** Because I thought that maybe I could help as far as leadership was concerned. In the [US] Army, I retired as a lieutenant colonel, and I thought I could contribute. It was just natural that I would go for the presidency.

**iNTOUCH:** Greg, what were your motivations for running the first time?

**Carley:** I ran to reform the Club. People were very unhappy with the pricing of the Club, so I ran as a reform

candidate, never having served on the Board. I went out and ran against three Board members and, if I recall, it was a landslide victory. However, the reform did not make much headway. I was not a very popular president with the Board, but I was popular with the Membership, so I was reelected.

**iNTOUCH:** Did you run for reelection because you felt that your job wasn't done?

**Carley:** It certainly wasn't done. I did what I thought was best. Just to sum

it up, I wanted to give a better deal to the Members.

**iNTOUCH:** Lance, what drove you to run for president?

**Lee:** Having sat on the Board when Greg was in his last year, I was privy to a lot of the reform he was trying to put in place at the time and all the emotions that were stirred up in the Membership, so that's part of the reason why I wanted to run. I actually wanted to run for president in 2003, but the people at the American Chamber [of Commerce

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You cannot be a Member of this club and not be doing something or know someone.

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Lance E Lee



## You could change the name tomorrow and it wouldn't make any difference—International Club or Tokyo Club or whatever.

Greg Carley

in Japan] asked me if I would run for president there.

**Carley:** Following my election, the Board started to change the rules. When I ran, I only needed two signatures from two Members to run for president. They changed the rules so somebody like me couldn't run again. Anyone should be able to run for president.

**Lee:** After you were president, they changed the rules so you [now] need 100 [signatures] to run for president, or 25 if you're a governor, if you weren't nominated by the Nominating Committee.

**iNTOUCH:** It seems that in general not many people seem to want to run for president. Why is that?

**Cropp:** I think basically you've got a bunch of people who are working and they may have things that they don't exactly appreciate with the Club, but they don't want to get involved. I think you've got a tremendous number of [Members] who don't want to put in the extra time from their jobs.

**Carley:** The average Member is only here for a few years. I never voted before I ran for president. Each year, as

Lance knows, they can't get more than 200 or 300 people to vote.

**Lee:** About 10 percent of the Membership.

**Carley:** The average Member here is only here for two or three years. He's got a job in a foreign country. What he's thinking about is keeping his family happy...and he's not thinking of voting.

**iNTOUCH:** Why is voter turnout typically low for Board elections?

**Carley:** Most Members don't know whom they're voting for. People vote with their hip pocket, so people will vote if they're really unhappy.

**Lee:** That's not unique to us. If you talk to people in other clubs, it's the same thing. Unless they are required to vote, and they're going to be penalized in some way or another for not voting, people just won't.

**Carley:** You can't expect them to get



involved with the Club. I'm sure they're very fond of the Club, but the primary Member has a job to do here; they're pretty busy.

**iNTOUCH:** To what degree did external factors, such as the economy, affect the fortunes of the Club during your terms?

**Carley:** The American Club in Tokyo doesn't have any competition. In Tokyo, there's one full-service club, so they really had a free ride. And, in a sense, they still have a free ride, except there's been a bit of overreach recently.

**Lee:** There's always going to be a little bit of turbulence every time you change the system you had before. Before, we were running the Club based on entrance fees, but most clubs are run off the dues that members pay. And changing to that [system] has caused a little turbulence, but nothing that we won't be able to overcome.

**iNTOUCH:** Dick, how different was the makeup of the Membership when you were president compared with the makeup of the Membership now?

**Cropp:** [There's] very little difference. Basically, the Japanese join because they want to be associated with Americans, but the Americans join to be associated with other Americans.

**Carley:** I think Dick is pretty much right. I don't think it has changed that much, though there's a tendency to believe that it's changed a lot. It really is attractive to expat families, and it's the only club in Tokyo that is. That's really its strength. In terms of changing over the past years, I understand that people are on shorter assignments now. This used to be the sort of elephant burial ground for executives who had reached a certain age. Now you have younger people staying shorter periods.

**Cropp:** I think a big change in the Club is that now it is more family oriented, whereas before it was more adult oriented.

**Lee:** The changes I've seen are that it [used to be] a seniors' club [and] also now we have more nationalities. We didn't have such a big range of different people from all over the world.

**iNTOUCH:** The local hire trend in the job market is growing in Japan. How are you dealing with that?

**Lee:** Because of that we've had to change the way we look at it. We have to do a little more marketing. Before, when you came [to Japan], this was somewhat considered an inconvenience for you. You couldn't get the American products you were used to, the literature you were used to, TV; all that's changed.

**iNTOUCH:** In an increasingly cosmopolitan city, with a well-traveled and cultured membership, what are the strengths of the Club? Why do people join?

**Lee:** I think they're joining because this is the best spam filter you can get. You cannot be a Member of this club and not be doing something or know someone.

**iNTOUCH:** So you're saying that people join the Club for the networking opportunities.

**Lee:** Absolutely.

**iNTOUCH:** To what degree do people join for the cachet of being a Member?

**Carley:** The Japanese are probably joining for the cachet, but that has become somewhat diluted now as the city has become more internationalized, and certainly there are other dining clubs.

**iNTOUCH:** How important is the "American" part of the Club's name? Obviously, in 1928 when the Club was established, it had a very different resonance.

**Carley:** You could change the name tomorrow and it wouldn't make any difference—International Club or Tokyo Club or whatever.

**Lee:** I don't feel that way and I don't think the Members would feel that way, either. They would want to see it as the Tokyo American Club. The American part adds value. I'm proud for this to be the Tokyo American Club.

**Carley:** The fact is only one-third of the Members are American, so, in a sense, it's a misnomer. The majority are non-

Americans. At one time, I think everyone was probably an American at the Club and [there were] a few Japanese.

**iNTOUCH:** What about you, Dick? Do you feel the American part of the name is important?

**Cropp:** Oh, yes, it's extremely important, and I think it's the reason the Club is what it is today and it's the reason it will continue to grow. If you change that, you're going to lose a hell a lot of people and a lot of people who contribute to the Club.

**Lee:** I don't think the name American Club makes it any better or anything else, but it's like trying to take the name Rolls-Royce away from that car. That





car by no means is the quietest or the safest or any of that, but it has built a reputation around itself, so that when people see [one]...they feel something about it.

**iNTOUCH:** Parking—or lack thereof—at the Club and the separation of adult and family areas were perennial issues for many years. Lance, how well does the new facility deal with these issues?

**Lee:** It's working so well. You could have 400 or more people at a [private] event here and the Members wouldn't even know it because of the [separate] entrances we have. For parking, we have 167 slots of mechanical parking and almost 200 [spaces] in total. We've never had that before.

**iNTOUCH:** How much of a headache were these issues for you, Greg?

**Carley:** Parking became a problem in the '80s. Part of that was because non-Members would park in the parking lot. There was never any limitation, either. People used to line up on the side street here waiting to get into the car park. There was one Member who used to phone into the Traders' Bar and have his drink brought out to him while he waited!

**iNTOUCH:** Although it's not possible to serve as Club president for more than two terms, if it were possible, would you run for president again?

**Cropp:** No.

**Carley:** No.

**Lee:** I would probably run again. Four years is not enough time. It's a multimillion-dollar business, and it's changed from when Dick was president. [The position] demands someone being here that people can talk to and see. □

The final date for voting in next month's Board of Governors election is Friday, November 18. Members can quiz those running for the Board at one of two Meet the Candidates evenings on November 9 and 14, from 6:30 p.m. in the Washington and Lincoln rooms.




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I think a big change in the Club is that now it is more family oriented, whereas before it was more adult oriented.

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Dick Cropp

As I opened the door of my apartment in Tokyo, I was confronted by Mr Miyagi from the 1984 hit movie *The Karate Kid*. As he moved deftly into the living room and was introduced to everyone, I wondered what the late Noriyuki “Pat” Morita was doing there.

Despite the remarkable resemblance, it was, in fact, print artist Akira Kurosaki, who had arrived to help the organizers of last year’s CWAJ (College Women’s Association of Japan) Print Show select the prints for the annual exhibition in October. Each year, organizers receive more than 600 prints for consideration.

Kurosaki was well qualified for the task. Having taught at numerous universities, including the Kyoto Institute of Technology, Harvard and Leiden University in the Netherlands, and won multiple awards and prizes for his artwork, Kurosaki has also, unsurprisingly, served on many international art juries.

Many of Kurosaki’s prints can be found in private collections and exhibitions around the world, and one of his works was chosen to grace the cover of this year’s CWAJ Print Show catalog.

“I saw Kurosaki’s print ‘Evening Snow on Mt. Hira’ soon after the earthquake, and it really struck me as a nostalgic call for the homeland, or *furusato*, in Japanese. In a time when Japan was

intensified in the 10th grade. At the age of 12, he started to take drawing and painting lessons. He first encountered woodcuts through the ukiyo-e prints he picked up in bookstores. Inspired by the art form and its use of color, he began to research woodcuts by himself before studying engraving from a master of the process, Susumu Hotta, and printmaking from Keizo Sato.

British artist Ralph Kiggell studied under Kurosaki at Kyoto Seika University and says the professor was always aware that woodblock printing (*mokuhanga*) was becoming increasingly international and that he was a part of that movement.

“For example, *mokuhanga* was not only appreciated for its historical roots in ukiyo-e, for its wonderful depictions of Japanese life, but also for its graphic boldness, and, of course, for its marriage of extraordinary materials, all of which Kurosaki’s work and process extended and exemplified,” he says.

Kiggell, who lived in Kyoto for year but who now spends much of his time in Thailand, says he learned the importance of working hard and experimenting with his craft from Kurosaki.

“Creating new methods is an integral part of my work,” Kurosaki affirms. “I am always trying out new techniques to expand the possibilities of the art.”

Residing in Kyoto, where he first discovered ukiyo-e, Kurosaki

# The Print Master

by Nancy Nussbaum

This month, the Club hosts the annual CWAJ Print Show, which brings together the breathtaking works of almost 200 print artists.

suffering, it made me quite emotional,” says Patricia Hiramatsu, co-chair of the 56th CWAJ Print Show. “Given this year’s extraordinary situation, I wanted to dedicate the catalog cover to Japan. I also liked the fact that it is a woodblock, or woodcut, which is the quintessentially Japanese printmaking technique among all techniques.”

The print is taken from the artist’s “Eight Views of Omi” series, which was inspired by eight poems written about the area south of Lake Biwa by a nobleman in the early 16th century. In his note at the front of the catalog, Kurosaki explains how he “recklessly dreamt” of depicting the stunning scenery of Omi, portrayed by such masters as Hiroshige and Shinsui.

“After I turned 70,” he writes, “I realized I could not waste any more time and, feeling as if I were taking a plunge from the top of a cliff, I began producing the whole eight images.”

In the piece, Kurosaki fondly recalls the five years he spent as a child in the Lake Biwa area: “When I was in high school, I was crazy about rowing crew boats in teams of 4 or 8 rowers and I learned how to sail a yacht. Even now I picture in my mind the bright surface of the lake where I so thoroughly enjoyed myself. Despite living most of my life in the city, Omi, with its rich nature and strong family connections, is engraved in my memory as my heart’s homeland.”

While he enjoyed art from an early age, Kurosaki’s interest

says he tries to create a new series of prints every two or three years. “If I do not feel the desire to make artworks, I don’t make them,” he explains. “To find new themes, I prepare by making sketches, reading, collecting materials and thinking about colors, techniques and the like.”

While he might not be adept at martial arts, Kurosaki is a master in his own right. □

Nussbaum is a co-chair of this year’s CWAJ Print Show.

## CWAJ Print Show

Thursday, October 13, 8–9 p.m. (preview and sale for Club Members only)

Friday, October 14, 11 a.m.–8 p.m.

Saturday, October 15, 11 a.m.–6 p.m.

Sunday, October 16, 11 a.m.–5 p.m.

Frederick Harris Gallery and Manhattan II and III

Free

Open to the public

Print Show catalogs can be purchased at the Member Services Desk (B1) until the end of November for ¥3,500.

All proceeds from this year’s Print Show will go to the CWAJ’s Scholarship and Education Fund and its Great East Japan Earthquake Relief Fund.





Akira Kurosaki

Yoko Naito



All exhibits in the Frederick Harris Gallery are for sale and can be purchased by Membership card at the Member Services Desk. Sales of works begin at 6 p.m. on the first day of the exhibition.

## Roni Ohara and Mimi Kanno



by Erika Woodward

Tropical paradise meets modern urban living this month when the Fredrick Harris Gallery hosts the elegant earthenware of Hawaiian native Roni Ohara and the sleek, stackable tableware of Tokyo-born Mimi Kanno for a stylish display of functional art.

Although she's a longtime resident of Japan, Ohara draws foremost on her fond childhood memories of Polynesian dance lessons when crafting her creations.

"I have lived in Japan for over 20 years, yet Hawaii and the hula is still my inspiration," says the University of Hawaii graduate, who studied with renowned ceramicist Harue McVay. "Pottery and hula share the same elements: fire, water, earth, air and timing."

For her latest exhibition at the Club, Ohara, 60, will display delicately painted plates and brawnier, bright-colored bowls among others items, influenced as much by the bold hues and flora of her home as Japan's signature glazes, which she learned at the pottery studio Soshigaya Tohboh in Tokyo.

"Soshigaya taught me great attention to detail, traditional techniques and a different approach to design and form," she says. "I fell in love with the traditional Japanese glazes and find they work well with my visions."

Kanno, 51, has taken her inspiration from the grandeur and grind of big city life since embarking on a career in pottery more than a dozen years ago.

"My designs are fitting for all kinds of cuisine and situations," says the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts graduate, whose latest installment at the Club will showcase lightweight, dishwasher- and microwave-safe designs that reflect her goal of marrying functionality and artistic quality. "I think these aspects are important for modern urban living."

### Exhibition

October 24–November 20

### Gallery Reception

Monday, October 24

6:30–8 p.m.

Frederick Harris Gallery (B1 Formal Lobby)

Free

Open to invitees and Members only





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Mimi Kanno



Roni Ohara



**International Herald Tribune**  
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## yokoso

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Brad Bennett & Bolormaa Ganbaatar  
United States—Chartis Far East Holdings K.K.

Alex Guizzetti & Annemarie McNamara  
United States—CA Technologies

Yuzuru Kato  
Japan—Dentsu, Inc.

Jiro & Taeko Tamura  
Japan—Keio University

Richard Reitknecht  
United States—Asia Pacific Land (Japan) Ltd.

Takashi Lee & Yoko Asai  
South Korea—Timberland Japan, Inc.

Michael & Susan Piatek  
United States—Walt Disney  
Attractions Japan Ltd.

Sean Evers & Diane McGee  
United States—Nomura Group

Joel & Yuki Peterson  
United States—UCB Japan Co., Ltd.

Seiichiro Nukui  
Japan—Accenture Corporation

Marjet Andriess & Owen van der Zalm  
Netherlands—Randstad K.K.

Alexander & Judith Horn  
Germany—BASF Japan Ltd.

Matthew & Kristen Joyce  
United States—Lubrizol Japan Ltd.

Mark & Jill Kupeski  
United States—IBM Japan Ltd.

Shinichiro & Lisa Kohri  
Japan—Dell Computer Corporation

Andrew & Ann Marie Gregory  
Australia—McDonald's Company  
(Japan) Ltd.

Andrew Smoler  
United States—Royal Bank of Scotland

Allison & Jason Rosario  
United States—PricewaterhouseCoopers Aarata

Miroslav Mijatovic  
Australia—Alchemy Japan K.K.

Hiroshi & Eriko Fujita  
Japan—Bank of Nova Scotia

Robert Frank & Lena Hajeane Hwang  
United States—Gap Japan K.K.

Brett & Christine Whiteoak  
Australia—North West Shelf Shipping  
Service Company

Michael & Asuka Horrigan  
United States—Amway Japan

Richard Binnie & Rachael Watts  
United Kingdom—Accenture Corporation

Maarten & Caroline Kila  
Netherlands—Philip Morris Japan K.K.

Albert & Kara Ann Piscopo  
United States—PricewaterhouseCoopers Aarata

Andrew Dahms & Eriko Morinaga  
Australia—Lenovo Japan Ltd.

Richard Tan & Khoo Lay Koon  
Singapore—AIU Insurance Company

Peter Ohler  
United States—KVH Co., Ltd.

Giles & Nicola Crowley  
United Kingdom—Zurich Insurance Co., Ltd.

## sayonara

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Marc Daniel & Nicole Fall  
Steven Brown & Keiko Sugeta  
Gerald Bullock, Jr & Takara Bullock  
Ivan Chan & Chie Sato  
Michael Fleming  
David Frentzel  
Tomoyuki & Kyoko Fujisawa  
Taro Gadelius  
Lawrence Ganti & Elaine Seto  
Daniel & Victoria Gerber  
Shawn & Lori Hansen  
Bernard Hurtig

Yasuo Ito  
Nick & Tomoko Johnston  
Siddhartha Kadia & Anjou Parekh  
David & Pia Keller  
Stephen & Patricia Lasher  
Duncan & Natasha Lingle  
Jean-Francois Lucas & Nicola Lucas  
Emily & Andrew Mackay  
Thomas Leo & Kyoko Madden  
David & Victoria McKellar  
Bryan & Cynthia Mix  
Matthieu & Gwenola Moussy  
Denis & Heidi Mulcahy

Masaru & Kazuko Nishimura  
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employee  
of the month

## Rodel Dimaano

by Nick Jones

With his mind firmly focused on the complexities of electrical engineering, Rodel Dimaano was planning on starting a career at the new power station once he graduated from college. But he also knew the realities of the Philippine economy. Jobs were scarce. Just six months out from completing his course in Manila, he decided to quit.

While Dimaano had little idea then, in the mid-1990s, he had taken his first step toward becoming a chef. Traveling outside the Philippines for the first time, he took a factory job in the South Korean city of Incheon. "It was a really nice experience," he says. "I was 21, and I really grew up in that time." He stayed for two years.

Arriving in Japan in 1998, he was

introduced to the owner of a restaurant in Kamiyacho. The Batangas native started out as a dishwasher but was given the opportunity to swap his scourer for a knife. "[The owner] taught me everything," he says. "I had no knowledge but he said, 'Just watch me and I will show you and teach you.'"

Dimaano immersed himself in his new profession, eagerly honing his skills at the stove and expanding his repertoire of dishes. "Everybody says you have to go to Japanese cooking school, but, in my experience, if you concentrate on something, nothing is impossible," he says. "You can achieve anything if you focus on what you're doing."

That determination eventually brought

him to the kitchens of Mixed Grille in the old Azabudai Club in 2005. Remaining in the popular restaurant, he now works in its new incarnation, American Bar & Grill. In August, he picked up the Employee of the Month award for his efforts there.

And even when the 37-year-old father of three heads home to Saitama, his enthusiasm for cooking doesn't let up. "I'm always cooking Philippine food at home and in my free time," he says. "My kids love it!" □

**Employee of the Year**

Suranga De Alwis of the Food & Beverage Department was named as the Club's Employee of the Year at the Employee Recognition Day party in August.

**New Member Profile**

Ira Blumberg & Kendra Lerner  
United States—Intellectual Ventures

**Why did you decide to join the Club?**

"A friend suggested that we tour TAC when we visited Japan in February, and we were impressed with the beautiful facilities and helpful staff. We decided to join as soon as we moved here this summer, so that we could take advantage of the Club's many programs and services right away. We enjoy the pool and fitness facilities, the good food and the Library and DVD Library. We look forward to getting to know other Club Members through social and recreational activities here as well."

(l-r) Kendra, Zack and Ira Blumberg

**New Member Profile**

Kathryn & Douglas Chuchro  
United States—Gap Japan K.K.

**Why did you decide to join the Club?**

"While we both have had previous experience in Japan, this is our first time here as a family. We are thrilled to be back in Tokyo and eager to explore it with the kids. Therefore, we were drawn to TAC by the sense of community. We look forward to meeting other families in the area. And we love the Sky Pool! Arriving in Tokyo in August was quite a shock to our San Francisco systems. One of the first phrases we learned here was 'Atsui ne,' so the pool has been a great refuge for us all."

(l-r) Doug, Walter, Katie and Elise Chuchro



# Game Over?



David Abrams

**iNTOUCH:** Many critics have been talking about the death of Japan's game industry. Is it that serious?

**Abrams:** It's more like the decline of the game industry in Japan in that the world is a large marketplace and Japan is a sizeable part of it, but it's not the be all, end all anymore. And the games that are made here just don't seem to be selling outside Japan. It used to be that all the games were made in Japan...but the games that are becoming huge blockbuster hits are all made in the West.

**iNTOUCH:** So what happened?

**Abrams:** I think tastes change. Americans tend to like the first-person shooter games like Call of Duty, and Japan doesn't really make first-person shooters. And that's basically the most popular genre in the world.

**iNTOUCH:** Why are first-person shooters not popular with Japanese gamers?

**Abrams:** [Japanese] like something more cartoony [and] they don't like the realistic violence, but in America and Europe, which is a huge market, it's really big. And the games that tend to sell a lot are these first-person shooter games or epic science-fiction role-playing games. But these are all very different from the Japanese role-playing game, which hasn't evolved much over the history of gaming. Sure, the graphics get better, but it seems that a lot of the game-play elements and structure haven't really changed that much or advanced with the technology.

**iNTOUCH:** Why is that?



Created in Japan in the 1980s, the likes of Pac-Man, Super Mario and Donkey Kong took the world by storm. Emerging from the fledgling arcade game scene, the titles still enjoy success today. The game industry, though, has undergone massive changes since Namco's iconic yellow character first chomped his way around the screen.

As the technology has developed over the years, so, too, has the level of sophistication of the games. And while Japan continued to produce the majority of the big console-game franchises through the 1990s, it now struggles to keep up with game developers abroad.

According to industry figures, Japan's share of the worldwide games market fell to around 10 percent in 2009, from a peak of 50 percent in 2002.

David Abrams is the founder of the video game website CAG. *iNTOUCH*'s Nick Jones sat down with the Club Member to talk about Japan's game industry. Excerpts:

**Abrams:** In America, they'll spend \$50 million to make a game and then spend another \$50 million to market the game. In Japan, they'll never do that. Maybe they're just averse to risk-taking or they don't have the confidence that they can create a game like that.

**iNTOUCH:** Japanese game developer Keiji Inafune said in an interview last year, "I look around Tokyo Game Show and everyone's making awful games; Japan is at least five years behind." Is that a fair comment?

**Abrams:** I think it is. There's a similar show in America called E3, and even setting up appointments to see stuff all day long for three days, you won't be able to see everything. And when I come to Tokyo Game Show, I can basically see everything I'm interested in on the first day before lunch. They don't seem to be innovating. Sure, some of the art style is really creative, but in terms of game play and even graphics, it does seem behind. It's probably because they're not willing to spend the money and have big teams like they do in the West. And it seems like there are certain parts of game development that Japan seems really far behind on like the online element.

**iNTOUCH:** Is this decline likely to continue?

**Abrams:** [The Japanese game developers] know their games are not selling in the West, they know they need to sell in the West and they also don't want to spend a lot of money. What's been happening pretty recently is that they've been hiring Western developers, which is smart because they're going to know better what a Western audience likes. Unfortunately, they haven't been willing to go far enough [and] you still see these lingering aspects of Japanese game design.

**iNTOUCH:** In terms of platforms for playing games, how does Japan differ from elsewhere?

**Abrams:** In America, Xbox 360, PlayStation 3 and the Wii are the home consoles. Xbox will never sell here [and] there's nothing Microsoft can do.

**iNTOUCH:** What about handheld consoles?

**Abrams:** It's a really interesting time for the handheld market because the [Nintendo] DS in the past has been a blockbuster [and sold] 150 million... and the PSP [PlayStation Portable] has sold around 70 million worldwide, which is nothing to sneeze at. But now the 3DS just came out and for the first time they're competing with smartphones, iPhones, Android phones, iPads, and it's a completely different marketplace. And the 3DS was released in March and they dropped the price \$80 [in August]. That's unheard of. Now if you want to play games, you don't need a dedicated system anymore.

**iNTOUCH:** Are we likely to see more games designed for these new platforms?

**Abrams:** The problem is Nintendo only just put out the 3DS and Sony's coming out with its PlayStation Vita this year in Japan and next year in America, and it's a tough sell. I don't think they're going to come anywhere near the success that they had with the previous models. I don't necessarily know if there's a big market for a dedicated handheld system anymore.

**iNTOUCH:** How is this going to affect the game developers?

**Abrams:** So here's the problem. If Sony and Nintendo can't sell a lot of these systems, publishers aren't going to want to put out games for these systems. I think they have a much better chance for the handhelds to be successful here than in America where the smartphones have been around for a lot longer. But the Japanese companies also recognize the opportunity there for smartphones as well. □

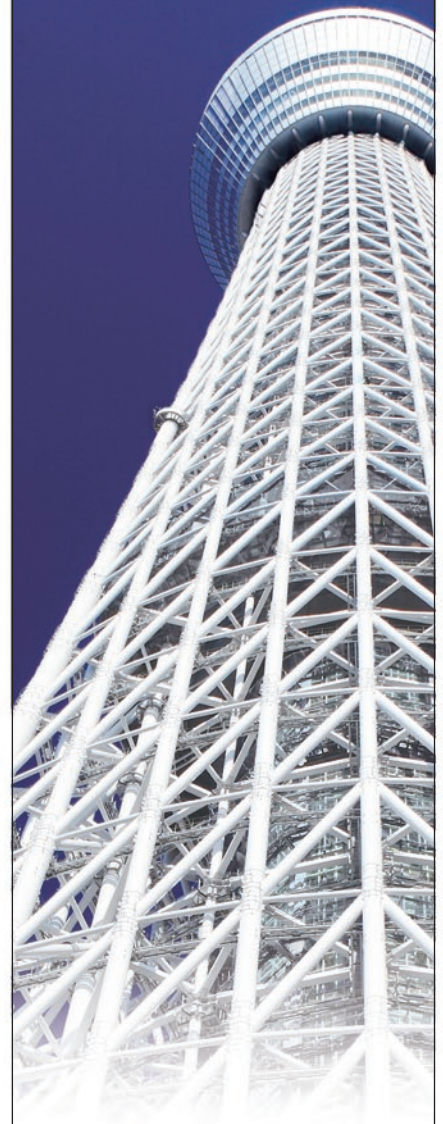
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# Smoke on the Water

Japan's heartland is home to intriguing historical spots, centuries-old crafts and a little fishy business.

by Tim Hornyak

With its source in Gujo, in the picturesque mountains of Gifu Prefecture, the Nagara River meanders south toward Ise Bay, passing through Gifu City where it plays host to a 1,300-year-old tradition of catching fish with birds.

Cormorant fishing, or *ukai*, is one of those spectacular Japanese traditions like Kabuki that may not entirely make sense at first blush, but is entirely worth seeing at least once. Basically, fishermen kitted out in straw skirts set out in boats and then deploy Temminck's cormorants into the river, each fitted with a tether and a ring around its neck. Under the light of a blazing pinewood fire, the birds hunt for *ayu* sweetfish, gobbling them up into their gullets. The neck rings prevent the birds from swallowing the *ayu*, which, after being disgorged back on the boat, are a delicacy.

Nobunaga Oda and Ieyasu Tokugawa, two of Japan's most famous samurai warlords, enjoyed sweetfish caught by cormorants and helped preserve the tradition. But even if you don't fancy the fish, lounging aboard the low-hulled passenger boats while taking in the torch-lit drama of *ukai* is a relaxing





Around 100 minutes by bullet train from Tokyo Station to Nagoya Station. Transfer to a special rapid express on the Tokaido Line for the 18-minute journey to Gifu City or take the Meitetsu Nagoya Line for 26 minutes to Inuyama.



**Gifu Nagara Cormorant Fishing**  
[www.ukai-gifucity.jp/ukai/](http://www.ukai-gifucity.jp/ukai/) (Japanese)

**Utsuboya**  
[www.utsuboya.info](http://www.utsuboya.info) (Japanese)

**WWW Gifu Convention and Visitors Bureau**  
[www.gifucvb.or.jp](http://www.gifucvb.or.jp)

**Castle Town Inuyama**  
<http://ml.inuyama.gr.jp>

**Sightseeing Association Aichi**  
[www.aichi-kanko.jp](http://www.aichi-kanko.jp)



way to spend an evening. Running from May 11 through October 15, the ukai season is especially enjoyable this month, when the torrid nights of summer are long past.

Nobunaga worked to consolidate Japan from his base in Gifu following the Warring States period in the 16th century. At age 34, he conquered what is now Gifu Castle, and the town became a thriving center for trade. The present Gifu Castle is a 1950s reconstruction of four floors, but its perch atop the 329-meter Mount Kinka is a good spot to survey the densely populated valley; gondolas can whisk you there from the park below in three minutes.

Some of Gifu City's best spots, though, are associated with traditional crafts. One of the most fascinating ateliers I've been to in Japan is Sakaida Eikichi Honten, a 10-minute walk from JR Gifu Station. The accommodating staff there were happy to have me sit on their *tatami*-mat studio floor and watch as they made hand-crafted paper umbrellas, or *wagasa*.

Started in 1639 as a means for lower-ranking samurai to earn extra cash, making *wagasa* involves creating brilliant designs on paper, which is stretched over bamboo ribs. The



local tourist office can point visitors to other crafts shops, such as lantern makers, but my favorite space in Gifu is an antiques shop and café called Utsuboya. Located near Gifu Park and Honmachi sanhome bus stop, Utsuboya specializes

in homemade dolls, donuts and marvelous miscellany from the past. It's an oasis for weary travelers.

A half-hour Meitetsu train ride from Gifu City is another cormorant fishing center: Inuyama, just over the border in Aichi Prefecture. A relative newcomer to the tradition, Inuyama has only hosted ukai for 340 years (the season is also shorter, from early June to mid-October), but floating down the Kiso River while viewing the fiery show is no less enchanting.

The real reason to visit Inuyama, though, is the riverside Inuyama Castle, a national treasure. Dating from 1537 and still fully intact, this little gem is the oldest extant donjon in Japan, and ranks with Matsumoto and Himeji castles among the country's great authentic fortresses. The admission ticket to Inuyama Castle also gives you access to two museums showcasing Inuyama's other jewels: ancient clockwork dolls. These marvelous wooden creations can perform tricks like carrying teacups or firing arrows from a bow. As the forerunners to modern Japanese robots, they combine beautiful design with remarkable engineering prowess.

The tradition of making *karakuri ningyo* dolls runs strong in the Tokai region, especially in a corridor stretching from Nagoya through Inuyama and north to Takayama. Inuyama, though, is home to the greatest *karakuri* festival in the nation. Held in April and October, the parade involves a grand procession of giant wooden floats, 370 years old and decked out with lanterns, upon which *karakuri* puppets dazzle onlookers with theater and acrobatics. If you're not in town during the festival, you can still admire some of the dolls in the Karakuri Exhibition Room and floats in the Donden Float Museum.

In any season, though, Inuyama is a delightful town with traditional architecture and street scenes, rickshaws and one of the country's oldest tea houses. Joan, another national treasure, was built in 1618 by Nobunaga Oda's brother, Uraku, a disciple of tea master Sen no Rikyu. A stroll through the surrounding Uraku Garden is a relaxing way to finish off a visit to this part of Tokai, before hopping a train to the nearby metropolis of Nagoya.□

Hornyak is a Montreal-based freelance journalist.



## Recreation Classes Open House

August 20

Ahead of the start of another inspiring semester of enrichment classes at the Club, around 50 Members dropped by the Gymnasium to find out more about the vast array of programs on offer this fall, from music and art to team sports and martial arts. Budding students were also treated to demonstrations by some of the class instructors, including judo exponent Chuck Wilson and Tempo Boxing's Aaron Hassell.

Photos by Yuuki Ide

1. (l-r) Sanae Takahata, Lara Ota and Megan and Olivia Kong
2. Club President Lance E Lee
3. Chuck Wilson and James Barringer
4. Jordan Kong
5. (l-r) Megan Kong, Benni Edriansyah and Rie Tanaka







## Big Winners! Wrap-Up Party

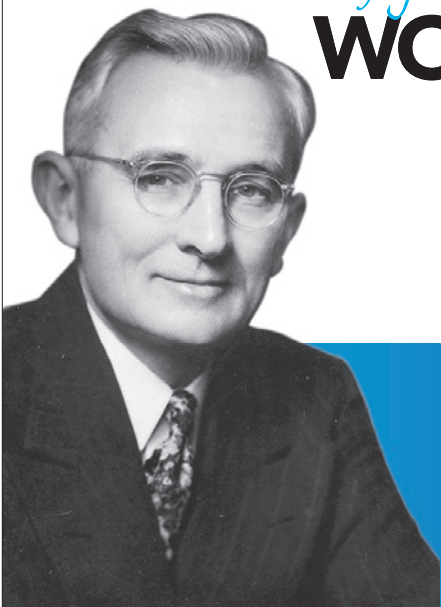
August 10

The Library's Summer Reading Program, which took award-winning children's books as its theme this year, drew to a close with an afternoon of creative fun, games and popcorn, hosted by the Library's Erica Kawamura.

Photos by Yuuki Ide

1. Christopher Hathaway 2. Anne Van Zandt 3. (l-r) Senna Min, Anne Van Zandt, Erica Kawamura and Christopher Hathaway 4. Senna Min





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## Open Mic Night

August 27

Traders' Bar was transformed into a hub of musical creativity as Club Member and drummer Jiro Makino and his band hosted an exhilarating evening of homegrown entertainment. Besides playing a selection of tunes, the group accompanied talented audience members eager for a few minutes in the spotlight.

Photos by Yuuki Ide

1. (l-r) Yoichi Yamaka, Kuro Kurokouchi and Jimi Noguchi
2. (l-r) Emi Endo and Yoshiki Hashimoto
3. Kuro Kurokouchi
4. Jiro Makino and Youichi Yamaka
5. (l-r) Randall Hyer, Ryoichi Onodera and Kuro Kurokouchi





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Landing at Detroit International Airport last fall, I was met by the smiling face of George. I was there to attend an anniversary event of the University of Michigan's law school in Ann Arbor. "Hi, Makoto," George said. As soon as I heard his gentle voice, I felt like I had returned home and the tiredness from the long flight from Tokyo quickly disappeared.

George J Siedel is a professor at the university's business school and a good friend. I first met him when I was sent by my employer, Nippon Life Insurance Company, to study at the law school in the 1970s.

At that time, George was an assistant professor in his 20s, close in age to many of the students, including myself. A kind and thoughtful teacher, he gave me good advice for my thesis and was a patient supervisor.

it's beer, wine, cocktails or sake) and golf (although he's not entirely happy with his scores). And, like me, he thinks of himself as a tortoise, taking a steady and diligent approach to life and sparing no pains in his work.

I often feel that George has a more Japanese personality. His respect for integrity, persistence, resilience, modesty, kindness, helpfulness and industriousness, as well as his emphasis on the common good over personal desires, are things Japanese understand.

I love Ann Arbor. It feels like my own hometown. It's here where I forged a friendship with George and my wife met Leslie de Pietro, who today is her best friend. Leslie and her family used to be our neighbors when we were living in Ann Arbor. Leslie gave us important advice and information about life in the city. Without her help, I doubt that our



## The Tortoise Club

by Makoto Toda

Our friendship grew during my time in Ann Arbor. I eventually received my master's degree and returned to my job in Japan, often thinking about George and the generous help he had given me. My studies at the university served me well in my work, particularly after I was promoted to senior managing director and was placed in charge of the company's global headquarters.

In 1997, I was appointed to the law school's committee of visitors and have returned to Michigan quite often. I was also a senior research scholar at the school for two months in 2003. During these visits, I again met George, who, by this time, was a leading scholar in business law. As always, he graciously helped me in my studies and daily life.

Like me, he enjoys drinking (whether

time there would have been as fruitful or interesting.

George has continued to offer me advice over the years, encouraging me to carry on teaching at Aoyama Business School and Chuo University after I retired from Nippon Life. As our friendship strengthened, we formed the "Tortoise Club" in recognition of our similar attitudes, and our e-mails frequently contain tortoise jokes now. The membership of this exclusive club remains at two, but it inspires me to keep practicing my golf game.

As a mark of respect for my lifelong teacher, friend and fellow tortoise, I composed a haiku: "One tortoise is crying, somewhere another hears." □

Toda is a Member of the Club.



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